POEMS OF PLACES

EDITED BY
HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

ITALY

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Poems of Places.

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HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY

BOSTON AND NEW YORK

POEMS OF PLACES

EDITED BY

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW

It is the Soul that sees; the outward eyes
Present the object, but the Mind descries.
CRABBE.

ITALY

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By HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

CONTENTS.

		PAGE
INTRODUCTORY.		
Italy	*Virgil*	1
Praises of Italy	"	2
Coast of Etruria	*Rutilius*	4
Italy	*Dante Alighieri*	7
Canzone	*F. Petrarca*	9
To Italy	*P. Bembo*	13
To Italy	*L. Alamanni*	14
To Italy	*G. Guidiccioni*	14
To Italy	*V. da Filicaja*	15
To Italy	*Anonymous*	15
Sea-Coast of Italy	*A. Tassoni*	16
To Italy	*G. Leopardi*	19
The Chronicle of the Boot	*G. Giusti*	20
Italy	*J. Addison*	26
Italy	*O. Goldsmith*	28
Italy	*S. Rogers*	29
Italy	*Lord Byron*	30
Italy	*B. W. Procter*	31
Mignon	*J. W. von Goethe*	33
The Daisy	*A. Tennyson*	34
Italy	*E. B. Browning*	38
Italy	*W. W. Story*	39
Through the Alpine Gates	*B. Taylor*	40
Lines written between Venice and Milan	*F. Smith*	42
Garibaldi and Italy	*Anonymous*	44
Lines on leaving Italy	*A. G. Oehlenschläger*	45
Farewell to Italy	*A. Jameson*	47
ALBAN HILLS.		
The Villa	*W. W. Story*	49
Monte Sacro	*J. Nichol*	50

AMALFI.
AMALFI . . . . . *S. Rogers* 51
AT AMALFI . . . . . *Lord Houghton* . . 53
AMALFI . . . . . *H. W. Longfellow* . . 54

APENNINES, THE.
PASSAGE OF THE APENNINES . . . . . *P. B. Shelley* . . . 57
TO THE APENNINES . . . . . *W. C. Bryant* . . 58
THE ASCENT OF THE APENNINES . . . *A. de Vere* . . . 60

ARNO, THE RIVER.
THE RIVER ARNO . . . . . *Dante Alighieri* . . 61

ARONA.
STANZAS ON THE LAGO MAGGIORE . . . *R. Southey* . . . 63
THE STATUE OF ST. CARLO BORROMEO . *A. de Vere* . . . 64

ARQUÀ.
ON THE TOMB OF PETRARCA . . . . . *B. Varchi* 65
PETRARCH'S TOMB . . . . . *Lord Byron* . . . 66
ARQUÀ . . . . . *S. Rogers* 67
WRITTEN IN PETRARCH'S HOUSE . . . *Lord Houghton* . . 69

ASPROMONTE.
GARIBALDI . . . . . *Anonymous* . . . 70

ASSISI.
THE SERMON OF ST. FRANCIS . . . . *H. W. Longfellow* . . 71

ATRI.
THE BELL OF ATRI . . . . . " . 73

BAIA (BAIÆ).
BAIÆ . . . . . *J. Thomson* . . . 77
RUINS OF CORNELIA'S HOUSE . . . . *A. de Vere* . . . 78

BOLOGNA.
BOLOGNA . . . . . *S. Rogers* 79

BRESCIA.
THE PATRIOT . . . . . *R. Browning* . . . 80

BRINDISI (BRUNDUSIUM).
BRUNDUSIUM . . . . . *Lucan* 82

BUSENTO, THE RIVER.
THE GRAVE IN THE BUSENTO . . . . *A. von Platen* . . 83
ALARIC . . . . . *F. Hemans* . . . 84

CADENABBIA.
CADENABBIA . . . . . *H. W. Longfellow* . 87

CANNÆ.
CANNÆ . . . . . *Lord Houghton* . . 89

CAPRI, THE ISLAND.
Capri . . . . . *S. Rogers* 90
Capri . . . . . *A. Austin* 91
The Azure Grotto . . . . . *C. D. Bell* 92
The Grotta Azzurra . . . . . *W. Gibson* 93

CAPUA.
Capua . . . . . *J. Nichol* 96

CATANIA.
Catania . . . . . *V. da Filicaja* . . 98
Lines on visiting the Monasteries at Catania . . . . . *J. H. Frere* . . . 98

CLITUMNUS.
Clitumnus . . . . . *Lord Byron* . . . 100

COGOLETTO.
Boyhood of Columbus . . . . . *J. R. Lowell* . . . 101

COMO, THE LAKE.
Lake of Como . . . . . *W. Wordsworth* . . 102
Lake of Como . . . . . " . . 104
Lake of Como . . . . . *S. Rogers* 105

CUMA (CUMÆ).
Cumæ . . . . . *Virgil* 107
The Sibyl's Cave at Cuma . . . . . *A. de Vere* . . . 108
Sibylla Cumana . . . . . *W. Gibson* . . . 109

ETNA (ÆTNA), THE MOUNTAIN.
Etna . . . . . *Pindar* 110
Etna . . . . . *Virgil* 111
Etna . . . . . *Virgil* 112
Mount Etna . . . . . *M. Arnold* . . . 113
Enceladus . . . . . *H. W. Longfellow* . 114

EUGANEAN HILLS.
The Euganean Hills . . . . . *P. B. Shelley* . . . 116

FANO.
The Guardian Angel . . . . . *R. Browning* . . 119

FERRARA.
Prison of Tasso . . . . . *Lord Byron* . . . 122
Tasso's Dungeon . . . . . *R. C. Trench* . . . 123
To the Duke of Alphonso, asking to be Liberated . . . . . *T. Tasso* 124
To the Princesses of Ferrara . . . " 125
To Scipio Gonzaga . . . . . " 127

FIESOLE.
THE FIG-TREES OF GHERARDESCA . . . *W. S. Landor* . . 128

FLORENCE.
FLORENCE IN THE OLDEN TIME . . . . *Dante Alighieri* . . 129
FLORENCE . . . . . *P. de' Medici* . . . 130
LINES WRITTEN ON APPROACHING FLORENCE *F. Smith* 131
FLORENCE . . . . . *S. Rogers* 133
FLORENCE . . . . . *S. T. Coleridge* . . 136
PIAZZA DELLA SIGNORIA . . . . . *S. Rogers* 137
THE STATUE AND THE BUST . . . . . *R. Browning* . . . 139
SANTA CROCE . . . . . *Lord Byron* . . . 145
SANTA MARIA NOVELLA . . . . . *E. B. Browning* . . 147
GIOTTO'S CAMPANILE . . . . . *A. de Vere* 148
GIOTTO'S TOWER . . . . . *H. W. Longfellow* . 149
THE OLD BRIDGE AT FLORENCE . . . . " . 149
SAN MINIATO . . . . . *J. Sterling* 150
CASA GUIDI WINDOWS . . . . . *B. Taylor* 150
THE VENUS DE' MEDICI . . . . . *Lord Byron* . . . 152
OLD PICTURES IN FLORENCE . . . . . *R. Browning* . . . 154
MASACCIO . . . . . *J. R. Lowell* . . . 156
UCELLO . . . . . *S. D. Clarke* . . . 157
DANTE ALIGHIERI . . . . . *D. G. Rossetti* . . 159
THE CAMPAGNA OF FLORENCE . . . . *S. Rogers* 161
ODE TO THE WEST-WIND . . . . . *P. B. Shelley* . . . 165

FORT FUENTES.
FORT FUENTES . . . . . *W. Wordsworth* . . 168

FRASCATI.
A ROOM IN THE VILLA TAVERNA . . . *F. A. Kemble* . . . 170
CLOSE OF OUR SUMMER AT FRASCATI . . " . . . 171
A VISIT TO TUSCULUM . . . . . *R. C. Trench* . . . 173

FRIULI, THE MOUNTAINS.
FRIULI . . . . . *Lord Byron* . . . 176

GARDA (BENACUS), THE LAKE.
BENACUS . . . . . *Virgil* 177
VINO SANTO . . . . . *H. Hunt* 177

GENOA.
APPROACH TO GENOA . . . . . *S. Rogers* 179
ANDREA DORIA . . . . . " 180
GENOA . . . . . *A. de Vere* 182
IN GENOA . . . . . *C. K. Aitkin* . . . 182
GENOA . . . . . *W. Gibson* 183

ISCHIA, THE ISLAND.
ISCHIA . . . . . *A. de Vere* . . . 183
INARIMÉ . . . . . *H. W. Longfellow* . 185

ISOLA BELLA.
NAPOLEON AT ISOLA BELLA . . . . . *Lord Lytton* . . . 187

LASTRA.
LASTRA A SIGNA . . . . . *S. D. Clarke* . . . 189

LA VERNA (ALVERNA), THE MOUNTAIN.
THE CONVENT . . . . . *B. W. Procter* . . 191

LERICI.
LINES WRITTEN NEAR SHELLEY'S HOUSE . *A. de Vere* 193
AFTER A LECTURE ON SHELLEY . . . . *O. W. Holmes* . . . 195

LICENZA.
THE SABINE FARM . . . . . *Horace* 197
FONS BANDUSIA . . . . . " 199

LYGURIA.
LIGURIA . . . . . *J. Thomson* . . . 200

LOMBARDY.
LOMBARDY . . . . . " . . . 201

LORETTO.
THE "SANTA CASA" AT LORETTO . . . *A. de Vere* . . . 201

LUCCA.
WRITTEN AT THE BATHS OF LUCCA . . . *Lord Houghton* . . 202

MANTUA.
MANTUA . . . . . *Dante Alighieri* . . 203
THE APOTHECARY . . . . . *W. Shakespeare* . . 205
ANDREW HOFER . . . . . *J. Mosen* 206

MAREMMA, THE.
MAZENGHI . . . . . *P. B. Shelley* . . . 207
THE MAREMMA . . . . . *F. Hemans* . . . 210

MENTANA.
MENTANA . . . . . *F. T. Palgrave* . . 211

MESSINA.
MESSINA . . . . . *F. Schiller* . . . 214

MILAN.
MILAN . . . . . *Ausonius* 214
SAINT AMBROSE . . . . . *G. Giusti* 215
THE LAST SUPPER . . . . . *W. Wordsworth* . . 219
LEONARDO'S "LAST SUPPER" AT MILAN . *A. de Vere* 219
THE CATHEDRAL OF MILAN . . . . . " 220

MILAN (*continued*).
MILAN CATHEDRAL . . . . . *J. B. Norton* . . . 221
MILAN CATHEDRAL . . . . . *H. G. Bell* 221
PADRE BANDELLI PROSES TO THE DUKE LUDOVICO SFORZA ABOUT LEONARDO DA VINCI . . . . . *W. W. Story* . . . 223
LEONARDO DA VINCI POETIZES TO THE DUKE IN HIS OWN DEFENCE . . . . . " . . . 226
AMBROSE . . . . . *J. R. Lowell* . . . 229

MINCIO, THE RIVER.
THE MINCIO . . . . . *A. di Costanzo* . . 231

MODENA.
MODENA . . . . . *A. Tassoni* . . . 232
GINEVRA . . . . . *S. Rogers* 233
THE SLEEPING FIGURE . . . . . *B. W. Procter* . . 236

MOLA DI GAETA.
THE FOUNTAIN . . . . . *S. Rogers* 238
LINES WRITTEN AT MOLA DI GAETA, NEAR THE RUINS OF CICERO'S FORMIAN VILLA . *A. Jameson* . . . 240

MONACO.
MONACO . . . . . *Lucan* 241

MONTE CASSINO.
MONTE CASSINO . . . . . *S. Rogers* 241
MONTE CASSINO . . . . . *H. W. Longfellow* . 243

MONTE CIRCELLO.
CIRCELLO . . . . . *Virgil* 247
MONTE CIRCELLO . . . . . *A. Aleardi* . . . 247

MONTE GARGANO.
MONTE GARGANO . . . . . *F. Hemans* . . . 249

MONTEPULCIANO.
MONTEPULCIANO WINE . . . . . *F. Redi* 250

NAPLES.
NAPLES . . . . . *Statius* 251
ODE TO NAPLES . . . . . *P. B. Shelley* . . . 252
STANZAS WRITTEN IN DEJECTION NEAR NAPLES " . . . 255
VIRGIL'S TOMB . . . . . *Anonymous* . . . 257
THE TOMB OF SANNAZZARO . . . . . *B. Menzini* . . . 258
NAPLES . . . . . *S. Rogers* 259
THE KING OF ARRAGON . . . . . *Spanish Ballad* . . 260
NAPLES . . . . . *F. Hemans* . . . 261
CONRADIN . . . . . " . . . 263
TO THE FLOWER OF GNIDO . . . . . *G. de la Vega* . . . 265

NAPLES (*continued*).

LUISELLA . . . . . *Anonymous* . . . 268
NAPLES . . . . . *W. Gibson* 269
NAPLES . . . . . *J. B. Norton* . . . 270

NAPLES, THE BAY.

SONG OF THE SEA . . . . . *R. W. Raymond* . . 271
THE SONG OF THE SIREN PARTHENOPE . *A. Jameson* . . . 272
DRIFTING . . . . . *T. B. Read* . . . 273

NEMI.

NEMI . . . . . *Lord Byron* . . . 276
NEMI . . . . . *J. E. Reade* . . . 277

INTRODUCTORY.

ITALY.

CLOSE to the neighboring Ceraunia now
We sail, whence lies our way to Italy,
The shortest course by sea. Meanwhile the sun
Goes down; the shadowy mountains hide in night.
On the earth's welcome lap we throw ourselves,
Beside the waves, the watch being set on board,
And here and there along the sandy beach
Refresh ourselves with food. Our weary limbs
Are bathed in sleep. Not yet the night had reached
Her middle course, when Palinurus leaves
His bed, — no sluggard he, — and all the winds
Essays, listening to catch their sounds; and notes
In the still sky the softly gliding stars,
Arcturus, and the rainy Hyades,
And the two Bears, and armed Orion bright
With gold. And when he sees that all is still
Amid the heavens serene, he from the stern
Gives the clear signal. Then we strike our tents,
And try the voyage, with our wingéd sails.

And now Aurora reddens in the east;
The stars had vanished; when, far off, we see
The dusky mountains and the long low shore
Of Italy. And "Italy" rings first
Achates' voice, and Italy with shouts
Of joy my comrades greet. My father then
Wreathes a great cup, and fills it up with wine,
And, standing in the stern, invokes the gods:
"Ye potent deities of sea and land,
And of the storms, grant us a passage safe,
And favoring breezes." Soon the wished-for winds
Freshen, and wider grows the harbor now;
Minerva's temple on a height appears;
We furl the sails, and turn our prows to land.

Virgil. Tr. C. P. Cranch.

PRAISES OF ITALY.

YET nor the Median groves, nor rivers rolled,
Ganges and Hermus, o'er their beds of gold,
Nor Ind, nor Bactra, nor the blissful land
Where incense spreads o'er rich Panchaia's sand,
Nor all that fancy paints in fabled lays,
O native Italy! transcend thy praise.
Though here no bulls beneath the enchanted yoke
With fiery nostrils o'er the furrow smoke,
No hydra teeth embattled harvest yield,
Spear and bright helmet bristling o'er the field;
Yet golden corn each laughing valley fills,
The vintage reddens on a thousand hills,
Luxuriant olives spread from shore to shore,

And flocks unnumbered range the pastures o'er.
Hence the proud war-horse rushes on the foe,
Clitumnus! hence thy herds, more white than snow,
And stately bull, that, of gigantic size,
Supreme of victims on the altar lies,
Bathed in thy sacred stream oft led the train,
When Rome in pomp of triumph decked the fane.
Here Spring perpetual leads the laughing hours,
And Winter wears a wreath of Summer flowers;
The o'erloaded branch twice fills with fruits the year,
And twice the teeming flocks their offspring rear.
Yet here no lion breeds, no tiger strays,
No tempting aconite the touch betrays,
No monstrous snake the uncoiling volume trails,
Or gathers, orb on orb, his iron scales.
But many a peopled city towers around,
And many a rocky cliff with castle crowned,
And many an antique wall, whose hoary brow
O'ershades the flood, that guards its base below.
Say, shall I add, enclosed on every side
What seas defend thee, and what lakes divide?
Thine, mighty Larius? or, with surging waves,
Where, fierce as ocean, vexed Benacus raves?
Havens and ports, the Lucrine's added mole,
Seas, that enraged along their bulwark roll,
Where Julian waves reject the indignant tide,
And Tuscan billows down Avernus glide?
Here brass and silver ores rich veins expose,
And pregnant mines exhaustless gold enclose.
Blest in thy race, in battle unsubdued
The Marsian youth, and Sabine's hardy brood,

By generous toil the bold Ligurian's steeled,
And spear-armed Volsci that disdain to yield:
Camilli, Marii, Decii, swell thy line,
And, thunderbolts of war, each Scipio, thine!
Thou Cæsar! chief, whose sword the East o'erpowers,
And the tamed Indian drives from Roman towers.
All hail, Saturnian earth! hail, loved of fame,
Land rich in fruits, and men of mighty name!
For thee I dare the sacred founts explore,
For thee the rules of ancient art restore,
Themes, once to glory raised, again rehearse,
And pour through Roman towns the Ascræan verse.

Virgil. Tr. William Sotheby.

COAST OF ETRURIA.

ILIUM'S woody heights my wonder raise,
Nor shall my verse defraud it of its praise:
The genius of the soil, or guardian power
Of Rome's high lord preserved in danger's hour
Its native thickets; and the foe withstood
With narrow frith, as with an ocean's flood.
And hither from the shattered city fled
Rome's refuged exiles, breathing from their dread.
The Gothic horsemen in their naval might
Had swept the seas, and waged unnatural fight;
One wondrous haven lent a sheltering home,
Far from the conquering Goth, yet near to Rome.
We touch on Umbro, no ignoble tide;
In whose safe mouth the storm-scared vessels ride:
So smooth the channel spreads its easy plain,

When the fierce tempest rushes on the main.
I sought to anchor in this tranquil bay,
But that our eager crew forbade delay.
Thus hastening on our course, at once the wind
Fell to a calm, the parting light declined;
Nor could we stretch before the onward gale,
Nor yet returning bend the backward sail.
By night, we quarter on the sandy shore,
And myrtle groves for evening homes explore.
With oars up-propped on oars we rear a shed,
The pole, transversely, roofs it overhead.
With dawn we rowed along the calmy tide,
Yet felt no motion, though the oars we plied.
Gazing the deep, the vessel seemed to stand;
Her course was seen from the receding land.
Ilva appears, for mines of steel renowned,
No richer metal lurks in Noric ground,
From Biturix' capacious furnace flows,
Or massive in Sardonian caverns grows.
Better the soil that teems with iron ore,
Than yellow sand on Tagus' gravelly shore;
For deadly gold of vice the basis lays;
The lust of gold to every crime betrays.

* * *

Our loosened course the near Falernia ends,
Though scarce the sun the middle sky ascends.
There, as it chanced, the village streets among,
Did sacred sports unbend the rustic throng.
Osiris' renovated form again
With joyful harvests crowned the teeming plain.
We leave the village, hoist the sail, and glide

O'er slimy sands, a mere's delicious tide.
The waves, enclosed, with free expansion stray,
In the wide pool the wanton fishes play:
But ill repaid the pleasant station's ease;
Its keeper churlish as Antiphates.

* * *

Adverse the north-wind rises; but, as day
Hides the pale stars, we sweep the watery way
With bending oars; till Populonia yields
Its natural bay, that winds into the fields.
No watch-tower there, on deep foundations raised,
High-seen in air, with nightly splendor blazed;
But age had worn the solid rocks away,
And insulated one with slow decay:
One rock, a natural beacon, spiring stood,
And overtopped the subjugated flood.
A twofold use the castled cliff supplied, —
An inland fortress, and an ocean guide.
Sunk are the monuments of ages past,
Time's eating canker has consumed the last:
Of walls long raised faint vestiges are found,
And roofs inearthed with ruins heave the ground.
If human dissolution prompt the sigh,
Lo! cities, e'en as men, are doomed to die.

When shifts the North, we hoist the sail with speed,
While shines the dawn-star on his rosy steed.
Next its dim mountains Corsica displayed,
Their cloud-capt heads were blended into shade;
As fades the dubious moon with crescent light,
And veiled in gloom eludes the straining sight.

Capraria rises, as our course we run;

The foul isle swarms with men who fly the sun:
Self-called the Grecian name of Monks they own,
Who choose to live unwitnessed and alone.

Rutilius. Tr. C. A. Elton.

ITALY.

ALAS! poor Italy, the home of woe,
Ship without pilot in an ocean wild,
No gentle lady, but a harlot thou!
So eager was that courteous spirit mild,
Only for the sweet sound of his own land,
To welcome joyfully his country's child:
And now in thee, not without warfare stand
Those who are yet alive; and each gnaws each,
Of those whom but one wall and ditch defend.
Seek, wretched one, around thy circling beach;
Then turn thine eyes, within thy bosom gaze,
And see if anywhere sweet peace doth reach.
What boots it that on thee Justinian lays
The bridle, if the saddle be not filled?
Else were there less of shame and sad amaze.
Ah! ye whose mad dissensions should be stilled
In loyal obedience unto Cæsar's throne,
If thou wouldst understand what God hath willed,
See how this beast is fierce and savage grown,
Because she is not governed by the spur,
And ye would rule her with the bit alone.
O German Albert, who forsakest her
Who all untamed and lawless has become,
While thou to ride this steed thy limbs shouldst stir,

On thee and on thy race may righteous doom
Fall from on high, made clearly manifest,
That he may fear who cometh in thy room.
Thou and thy father were in such hot haste
For distant conquest, that ye now permit
The garden of the empire to be waste.
Come look on Montague and Capulet,
Monaldi, Filippeschi, heartless power!
And some do groan, some only fear as yet.
Come, cruel, come, and thou shalt see how sore
The pains and sorrows by thy vassals borne;
And look how safe it is in Santafior!
Come and behold thy Rome, who now doth mourn,
Lonely and widowed; day and night she cries,
"My Cæsar, wherefore leav'st thou me forlorn?"
Come see what love among thy people lies;
And if naught else can thee to pity move,
At the dishonor of thy name arise!
And (be it said with reverence) God of love,
Who upon earth for us was crucified,
Dost fix thine eyes but on the realms above?
Or does there in thy counsels' depths abide
Some purpose for our good, by us unknown,
And lying from our vision all too wide?
For the whole land of Italy doth groan
Beneath the sway of tyrants; peasants swell
With pride, as though Marcellus were each one.

Dante Alighieri. Tr. Mrs. Ramsay.

CANZONE.

O MY own Italy! though words are vain
The mortal wounds to close,
Unnumbered, that thy beauteous bosom stain,
Yet may it soothe my pain
To sigh forth Tiber's woes,
And Arno's wrongs, as on Po's saddened shore
Sorrowing I wander, and my numbers pour.
Ruler of Heaven! by the all-pitying love
That could thy Godhead move
To dwell a lowly sojourner on earth, —
Turn, Lord, on this thy chosen land thine eye!
See, God of charity,
From what light cause this cruel war has birth!
And the hard hearts by savage discord steeled,
Thou, Father, from on high,
Touch by my humble voice, that stubborn wrath may yield!

Ye, to whose sovereign hands the Fates confide
Of this fair land the reins, —
This land, for which no pity wrings your breast, —
Why does the stranger's sword her plains infest?
That her green fields be dyed,
Hope ye, with blood from the barbarians' veins?
Beguiled by error weak,
Ye see not, though to pierce so deep ye boast,
Who love or faith in venal bosoms seek:

When thronged your standards most,
Ye are encompassed most by hostile bands.
O hideous deluge gathered in strange lands,
That, rushing down amain,
O'erwhelms our every native lovely plain!
Alas! if our own hands
Have thus our weal betrayed, who shall our cause sustain?

Well did kind Nature, guardian of our state,
Rear her rude Alpine heights,
A lofty rampart against German hate;
But blind Ambition, seeking his own ill,
With ever restless will,
To the pure gales contagion foul invites:
Within the same strait fold
The gentle flocks and wolves relentless throng,
Where still meek innocence must suffer wrong;
And these — O shame avowed! —
Are of the lawless hordes no tie can hold:
Fame tells how Marius' sword
Erewhile their bosoms gored, —
Nor has Time's hand aught blurred the record proud!
When they who, thirsting, stooped to quaff the flood,
With the cool waters mixed, drank of a comrade's blood!

Great Cæsar's name I pass, who o'er our plains
Poured forth the ensanguined tide,
Drawn by our own good swords from out their veins;
But now — nor know I what ill stars preside —
Heaven holds this land in hate!

To you the thanks, whose hands control her helm! —
You, whose rash feuds despoil
Of all the beauteous earth the fairest realm!
Are ye impelled by judgment, crime, or fate,
To oppress the desolate?
From broken fortunes and from humble toil
The hard-earned dole to wring,
While from afar ye bring
Dealers in blood, bartering their souls for hire?
In truth's great cause I sing,
Nor hatred nor disdain my earnest lay inspire.

Nor mark ye yet, confirmed by proof on proof,
Bavaria's perfidy,
Who strikes in mockery, keeping death aloof;
(Shame, worse than aught of loss, in honor's eye!)
While ye with honest rage, devoted pour
Your inmost bosom's gore? —
Yet give one hour to thought,
And ye shall own how little he can hold
Another's glory dear, who sets his own at naught.
O Latin blood of old,
Arise, and wrest from obloquy thy fame,
Nor bow before a name
Of hollow sound, whose power no laws enforce!
For if barbarians rude
Have higher minds subdued,
Ours, ours the crime! — not such wise Nature's course.

Ah! is not this the soil my foot first pressed?
And here, in cradled rest,

Was I not softly hushed, — here fondly reared?
Ah! is not this my country, so endeared
By every filial tie,
In whose lap shrouded both my parents lie?
O, by this tender thought
Your torpid bosoms to compassion wrought,
Look on the people's grief,
Who, after God, of you expect relief!
And if ye but relent,
Virtue shall rouse her in embattled might,
Against blind fury bent,
Nor long shall doubtful hang the unequal fight;
For no, — the ancient flame
Is not extinguished yet, that raised the Italian name!

Mark, sovereign lords, how Time, with pinion strong,
Swift hurries life along!
E'en now, behold, Death presses on the rear!
We sojourn here a day, — the next, are gone!
The soul, disrobed, alone,
Must shuddering seek the doubtful pass we fear.
O, at the dreaded bourn
Abase the lofty brow of wrath and scorn!
(Storms adverse to the eternal calm on high!)
And ye, whose cruelty
Has sought another's harm, by fairer deed
Of heart or hand or intellect, aspire
To win the honest meed
Of just renown, the noble mind's desire!
Thus sweet on earth the stay!
Thus to the spirit pure unbarred is heaven's way!

My song, with courtesy, and numbers sooth,
Thy daring reasons grace!
For thou the mighty, in their pride of place,
Must woo to gentle ruth,
Whose haughty will long evil customs nurse,
Ever to truth averse!
Thee better fortunes wait,
Among the virtuous few, the truly great!
Tell them, But who shall bid my terrors cease?
Peace! Peace! on thee I call! return, O heaven-born
Peace!

Francesco Petrarca. Tr. Lady Dacre.

TO ITALY.

FAIR land, once loved of Heaven o'er all beside,
Which blue waves gird and lofty mountains screen!
Thou clime of fertile fields and sky serene,
Whose gay expanse the Apennines divide!
What boots it now, that Rome's old warlike pride
Left thee of humbled earth and sea the queen?
Nations, that served thee then, now fierce convene
To tear thy locks and strew them o'er the tide.
And lives there son of thine so base at core,
Who, luring foreign friends to thine embrace,
Stabs to the heart thy beauteous, bleeding frame?
Are these the noble deeds of ancient fame?
Thus do ye God's almighty name adore?
O hardened age! O false and recreant race!

Pietro Bembo. Tr. Anon.

TO ITALY.

THANKS be to God, my feet are now addressed,
Proud Italy, at least to visit thee,
After six weary years, since destiny
Forbids me in thy dear-loved lap to rest.
With weeping eyes, with look and heart depressed,
Upon my natal soil I bend the knee,
While hope and joy my troubled spirit flee,
And anguish, rage, and terror fill my breast.
I turn me, then, the snowy Alps to tread,
And seek the Gaul, more kindly prompt to greet
The child of other lands, than thou art thine:
Here, in these shady vales, mine old retreat,
I lay, in solitude, mine aching head,
Since Heaven decrees, and thou dost so incline.

Luigi Alamanni. Tr. Anon.

TO ITALY.

FROM ignominious sleep, where age on age
Thy torpid faculties have slumbering lain,
Mine Italy, enslaved, ay, more, insane, —
Wake, and behold thy wounds with noble rage!
Rouse, and with generous energy engage
Once more thy long-lost freedom to obtain;
The path of honor yet once more regain,
And leave no blot upon my country's page!
Thy haughty lords, who trample o'er thee now,

Have worn the yoke which bows to earth thy neck,
And graced thy triumphs in thy days of fame.
Alas! thine own most deadly foe art thou,
Unhappy land! thy spoils the invader deck,
While self-wrought chains thine infamy proclaim!

Giovanni Guidiccioni. Tr. Anon.

TO ITALY.

ITALY! Italy! thou who 'rt doomed to wear
The fatal gift of beauty, and possess
The dower funest of infinite wretchedness
Written upon thy forehead by despair;
Ah! would that thou wert stronger, or less fair,
That they might fear thee more, or love thee less,
Who in the splendor of thy loveliness
Seem wasting, yet to mortal combat dare!
Then from the Alps I should not see descending
Such torrents of armed men, nor Gallic horde
Drinking the wave of Po, distained with gore,
Nor should I see thee girded with a sword
Not thine, and with the stranger's arm contending,
Victor or vanquished, slave forevermore.

Vincenzo da Filicaja. Tr. H. W. Longfellow.

TO ITALY.

O LAND of beauty, garlanded with pine
And luscious grape-vines, 'neath whose vaulted skies
Of blue eternal, marble mansions rise,
And roseate flowers from every lattice shine!

Still have the nations striven from of yore
For thy fair fields, lovely as Eden's plain;
Thy temples, and thy cities by the main
Throned hoar and gray upon the rocky shore.
Who hath seen thee, O, never in his breast
The heart grows wholly old! Some youthful zest
Of life still lingers; some bright memory!
And when the nightingales in autumn chill
Fly forth, a yearning stirs his spirit still
To fly with them toward sunny Italy!

Anonymous.

SEA-COAST OF ITALY.

TO instigate Taranto's prince, to arm
His valiant people for the mighty shock,
And save his brother from impending harm,
Imprisoned by the foe, disastrous stroke!
Forth sailed the vessel, breathing round a charm,
And keeping well at sea from sand or rock;
The goddess sat, in gold and azure veiled,
Upon the poop, from man and heaven concealed.

Capraia and Gorgona having past,
She turns towards the left the glittering prow;
Leghorn, then Elba, famous for its vast
Ferruginous mines; and low Faleria now,
And Piombino are behind her cast;
Countries which still to Ocean's monarch bow;
Where still the eagle, with triumphant wings,
O'er mountain, plain, and sea his shadow flings.

* * *

In troops the dolphins joyfully escort
The sparkling bark upon its easy way;
Smiling the sea-nymphs lightly dance and sport
On every side, unceasing in their play;
She sees the Umbroné issuing from its port,
And Giglio to the southward, and the spray
Washing the dark and ruinous sides of steep
Mount Argentarius, mid the Tuscan deep.

Here to the right before the wind she steers,
And on the left the port of Hercules
Recedes; Civita Vecchia now appears,
And all the glittering coast the goddess sees;
Then Porto di Trajano, worn by years,
In miserable ruins, dome and frieze;
Time whelms the tower, dissolves the marble bust,
The noblest works become a heap of dust.

The Tiber was not distant, when arose
From sleep the South-wind, which in Lybia reigns,
And, rushing to the shore, indignant blows
Across the sea, and every check disdains;
He sees the silver sails and inward glows
With daring thoughts, — above the watery plains
He flies, to ask the lovely vessel's freight,
And finds the Queen of Beauty there in state.

* * *

The low flat coast of Ostia had receded,
And Anzio risen to view, when Beauty's Queen
The rumor heard, and saw how gust succeeded
O'erwhelming gust, and blackened all the scene;

She saw the nymphs, how fleetly they proceeded
From the vexed, angry sea, with fearful mien;
Disdainful then she threw her veil aside,
And showed herself to heaven in all her beauty's pride.

* * *

With crimson gowns, and turbans on the head,
Nettun's fair damsels on the beach are seen;
She passes close Astura, where betrayed
In his disastrous flight was Corradin.
God, for that deed, a punishment has laid
Upon the land, which from that time has been
Desert and waste; now Mount Circell appears,
His feet amidst the sea, his head to heaven he rears.

Onward she goes, and rapid leaves behind
Ponzia and Palmarola, where of yore
By tyrant Rome the illustrious were confined,
Secret and lonely. Scattered on the shore
Gleam various towers; before the buxom wind
Swift flies the vessel, now is seen no more
Dim Terracena; now remote is found
Upon the left Gäeta, — place renowned.

Gäeta now is passed, and sailing on
She gaineth Procida, steering near its coast;
And then Puzzolo, long familiar known
For its sulphureous streets; that too is lost;
Then cometh Nisida, with an emerald zone,
Whence is beheld bright Naples and its boast,
The glorious bay; and seemingly with glee
The Queen of Ocean greets the Goddess of the Sea.

Alessandro Tassoni. Tr. James Atkinson.

TO ITALY.

O ITALY, my country! I behold
Thy columns, and thine arches, and thy walls,
And the proud statues of our ancestors;
The laurel and the mail with which our sires
Were clad, these I behold not, nor their fame.
Why thus unarmed, with naked breast and brow?
What means that livid paleness, those deep wounds?
To heaven and earth I raise my voice, and ask
What hand hath brought thee to this low estate,
Who, worse than all, hath loaded thee with chains,
So that, unveiled and with dishevelled hair,
Thou sittest on the ground disconsolate,
Hiding thy weeping face between thy knees?
Ay, weep, Italia! thou hast cause to weep!
Degraded and forlorn. Yes, were thine eyes
Two living fountains, never could thy tears
Equal thy desolation and thy shame!
Fallen! — ruined! — lost! who writes or speaks of thee,
But, calling unto mind thine ancient fame,
Exclaims, "Once she was mighty! Is this she?".
Where is thy vaunted strength, thy high resolve?
Who from thy belt hath torn the warrior sword?
How hast thou fallen from thy pride of place
To this abyss of misery! Are there none
To combat for thee, to defend thy cause?
To arms! Alone I 'll fight and fall for thee!
Content if my best blood strike forth one spark
To fire the bosoms of my countrymen.

Where are thy sons! I hear the clang of arms,
The din of voices, and the bugle-note;
Sure they are fighting for a noble cause!
Yes, one faint hope remains, — I see, — I see
The fluttering of banners in the breeze;
I hear the tramp of horses and of men,
The roar of cannon, and, like glittering lamps
Amid the darkening gloom, the flash of swords.
Is there no comfort? And who combat there
In that Italian camp? Alas, ye gods,
Italian brands fight for a foreign lord!
O, miserable those whose blood is shed
Not for their native land, for wife or child,
But for a stranger lord, — who cannot say
With dying breath, "My country! I restore
The life thou givest, and gladly die — for thee!"

Giacomo Leopardi. Tr. Anon.

THE CHRONICLE OF THE BOOT.

I WAS not made of common calf,
Nor ever meant for country loon;
If with an axe I seem cut out,
The workman was no cobbling clown;
A good jack-boot with double sole he made,
To roam the woods, or through the rivers wade.

Down from the thigh unto the heel
I 'm ever wet, and stand it well;
Good for the chase, or spurring hard,
As many jackasses can tell.

Sewn strong with solid stitching, you must know,
At top a hem, all down a seam I show.

But then, to don I 'm rather hard;
  Unfit for wear of hucksters small,
I tire and gall a feeble foot,
  And most men's legs don't fit at all.
To wear me long has been the lot of none;
A little while has satisfied each one.

I 'll give you here no catalogue
  Of all who wished to try their foot;
But here and there, merely for fun,
  The most illustrious I 'll quote.
How torn and maimed I 've been I 'll tell in brief,
And then how passed along from thief to thief.

'T will seem incredible; but once
  I set off at a gallop round,
And traversed all the world full speed;
  But, running over too much ground,
I lost my balance, and I fell down smack
By my own weight, full-length upon my back.

Then was a rumpus and a row;
  Men of all nations, greatest, least,
Poured down some thousand thousand miles,
  Led by the Devil and a priest:
Some caught the leg, some held the tasselled tie;
And "Touch and take!" was on all sides the cry.

A priest, regardless of the faith,
  Helped or unhelped would put me on,

Then found I did not fit his foot,
So let me out to any one;
And thus at last in the first comer's hands
He leaves me, and for boot-hook only stands.

A German braggart with the priest
Played pikes to put his heel in me;
But homewards on St. Francis' nag
Full many a time I've seen him flee.
Again he hither came, but sore of foot;
Nor has he ever yet quite donned the Boot.

Unworn for one whole age or more,
Then pulled on by a merchant plain,
He greased me fresh, and made me trot
To the Levant and back again.
Unpolished, true; but not one jot I failed,
With rare good hobs and sparables well nailed.

The merchant throve; then thought it right
To polish up and smarten me;
I wore the spur, the fleece of gold,
But lost my old consistency.
Change followed change, that now I plainly see
That my first nails were far the best for me.

I had nor rip nor wrinkle then;
When from the west a pilfering oaf
Jumped from his galley on my heel,
Tried even to insert his hoof.
But comfortably there he could not stay;
And at Palermo him I lamed one day.

'Mongst ultramontane amateurs
A certain King of Spades essayed,
With feet and hands to put me on;
But like Berlicche there he stayed,
When jealous of the roost a Capon crowing,
Just threatened him to set the bells a-going.

My ruin to complete just then,
Or maybe later, an M. D.,
Leaving his drugs and shop, rushed forth;
Upon my upper-leathers he
To help my case devised intrigues and lies,
Whose web was woven for three centuries.

He polished, gimcracked me all o'er,
And with emollients, glosses rare,
He rubbed me till I lost my skin;
And he who had me next in care
Still doctored me according to the rule
Of that iniquitious and cursed school.

Thus tossed about from hand to hand,
I every harpy's mark became.
Both Frank and Spaniard I endured,
Who played the "Devil and Baker's" game.
Don Quixote proved at length the lucky wight;
But rent and ridiculed he held me tight.

Who saw me on the Spaniard's foot
Say that I sat "malissimo,"
Though greased and varnish-daubed, and styled,
"Chiarissimo," "Illustrissimo."

But on the sly he used the file so sore,
That I was left more ragged than before.

Thenceforth each one at his own will
Using the pincers and the awl
From frying-pan to fire I fell.
Rogues, bullies, barons, great and small,
To torture me had each a new idea,
"Et diviserunt vestimenta mea."

Thus shuffled on from hoof to hoof
Of each untutored clownish brute,
I 've come to lose the olden print
Of that upright, well-planted foot,
On which, without one single crooked tread,
The circuit of the Universe I made.

O wretched boot! I must confess
One foolish plan has me undone;
Of walking with another's legs
When it was time to use my own;
And more than this, the madness most unmeet,
Of hoping change of luck from change of feet.

With tears I say it; for I feel
Myself all shattered and awry;
Earth seems to shake beneath my tread
If but one single step I try.
By dint of letting bad guides lead me so,
I 've lost the habit and the power to go.

But my worst foes have been the priests,
Unconscionable grasping race!

I'd have at certain poets too
Who count their bead-roll nowadays,
Christ goes for nothing; the Decretal puts
A veto 'gainst the priesthood wearing "boots."

Torn and neglected now I lie,
And pawed by every dirty hand,
Long have I waited for some leg
To fill my wrinkles, make me stand;
No German leg or Frenchman's be it known,
But one within my native country grown.

A certain great man's once I tried,
Who, had he not gone strolling forth,
Might well have boasted he possessed
In me the strongest boot on earth.
But snow-storms, on his crooked course one day,
Froze both his legs just as he got half-way.

Refitted on the ancient last
And subject to the knife again,
Though once of mighty worth and weight,
My under-leathers scarce remain;
And as for patching holes both new and old,
It is not thread nor pegs will make them hold.

The cost is dear, the labor long;
You must patch over piece by piece;
Brush off the dirt in ancient mode,
Drive nails and brads; then by degrees,
The calf and upper-leathers all remake:
But to the cobbler go, for Heaven's sake!

Find me but out some man; he 'll do,
If only not a coward: when
I find myself upon his foot,
Should some kind sir, like former men,
Presume with me in the old way to treat,
We 'll give him a sound kick on honor's seat.

Giuseppe Giusti. Tr. Anon.

ITALY.

TO LORD HALIFAX.

WHILE you, my Lord, the rural shades admire,
And from Britannia's public posts retire,
Nor longer, her ungrateful sons to please,
For their advantage sacrifice your ease,
Me into foreign realms my fate conveys,
Through nations fruitful of immortal lays,
Where the soft season and inviting clime
Conspire to trouble your repose with rhyme.
For wheresoe'er I turn my ravished eyes,
Gay gilded scenes and shining prospects rise,
Poetic fields encompass me around,
And still I seem to tread on classic ground;
For here the Muse so oft her harp has strung,
That not a mountain rears its head unsung,
Renowned in verse each shady thicket grows,
And every stream in heavenly numbers flows.
How am I pleased to search the hills and woods
For rising springs and celebrated floods!
To view the Nar, tumultuous in his course,

And trace the smooth Clitumnus to his source,
To see the Mincio draw his watery store
Through the long windings of a fruitful shore,
And hoary Albula's infected tide
O'er the warm bed of smoking sulphur glide.
Fired with a thousand raptures, I survey
Eridamus through flowery meadows stray,
The king of floods! that, rolling o'er the plains,
The towering Alps of half their moisture drains,
And, proudly swoln with a whole winter's snows,
Distributes wealth and plenty where he flows.
Sometimes, misguided by the tuneful throng,
I look for streams immortalized in song,
That lost in silence and oblivion lie,
(Dumb are their fountains and their channels dry),
Yet run forever by the Muse's skill,
And in the smooth description murmur still.
Sometimes to gentle Tiber I retire,
And the famed river's empty shores admire,
That destitute of strength derives its course
From thrifty urns and an unfruitful source;
Yet sung so often in poetic lays,
With scorn the Danube and the Nile surveys.

* * *

See how the golden groves around me smile,
That shun the coast of Britain's stormy isle,
Or when transplanted and preserved with care,
Curse the cold clime, and starve in northern air.
Here kindly warmth their mounting juice ferments
To nobler tastes and more exalted scents:
Even the rough rocks with tender myrtle bloom,

And trodden weeds send out a rich perfume.
Bear me, some god, to Baia's gentle seats,
Or cover me in Umbria's green retreats;
Where western gales eternally reside,
And all the seasons lavish all their pride:
Blossoms and fruits and flowers together rise,
And the whole year in gay confusion lies.

Joseph Addison.

ITALY.

FAR to the right, where Apennine ascends,
Bright as the summer Italy extends.
Its uplands sloping deck the mountain's side,
Woods over woods in gay theatric pride;
While oft some temple's mouldering tops between
With venerable grandeur mark the scene.

Could nature's bounty satisfy the breast,
The sons of Italy were surely blest.
Whatever fruits in different climes are found,
That proudly rise, or humbly court the ground;
Whatever blooms in torrid tracts appear,
Whose bright succession decks the varied year:
Whatever sweets salute the northern sky
With vernal lives, that blossom but to die, —
These, here disporting, own the kindred soil,
Nor ask luxuriance from the planter's toil;
While sea-born gales their gelid wings expand
To winnow fragrance round the smiling land.

Oliver Goldsmith.

ITALY.

O ITALY, how beautiful thou art!
Yet I could weep, — for thou art lying, alas,
Low in the dust; and we admire thee now
As we admire the beautiful in death.
Thine was a dangerous gift, when thou wert born,
The gift of Beauty. Would thou hadst it not;
Or wert as once, awing the caitiffs vile
That now beset thee, making thee their slave!
Would they had loved thee less, or feared thee more!
— But why despair? Twice hast thou lived already;
Twice shone among the nations of the world,
As the sun shines among the lesser lights
Of heaven; and shalt again. The hour shall come
When they who think to bind the ethereal spirit,
Who, like the eagle cowering o'er his prey,
Watch with quick eye, and strike and strike again
If but a sinew vibrate, shall confess
Their wisdom folly. Even now the flame
Bursts forth where once it burnt so gloriously,
And, dying, left a splendor like the day,
That like the day diffused itself, and still
Blesses the earth, — the light of genius, virtue,
Greatness in thought and act, contempt of death,
Godlike example.

Samuel Rogers.

ITALY.

I LIKE on autumn evenings to ride out
Without being forced to bid my groom be sure
My cloak is round his middle strapped about,
Because the skies are not the most secure;
I know, too, that if stopped upon my route,
Where the green alleys windingly allure,
Reeling with grapes red wagons choke the way, —
In England 't would be dung, dust, or a dray.

I also like to dine on becaficas,
To see the sun set, sure he 'll rise to-morrow,
Not through a misty morning twinkling weak as
A drunken man's dead eye in maudlin sorrow,
But with all heaven to himself; the day will break as
Beauteous as cloudless, nor be forced to borrow
That sort of farthing candlelight which glimmers
Where reeking London's smoky caldron simmers.

I love the language, that soft bastard Latin,
Which melts like kisses from a female mouth,
And sounds as if it should be writ on satin,
With syllables which breathe of the sweet South,
And gentle liquids gliding all so pat in,
That not a single accent seems uncouth,
Like our harsh northern whistling, grunting guttural,
Which we 're obliged to hiss, and spit, and sputter all.

I like the women too (forgive my folly),
From the rich peasant-cheek of ruddy bronze,

And large black eyes that flash on you a volley
Of rays that say a thousand things at once,
To the high dama's brow, more melancholy,
But clear, and with a wild and liquid glance,
Heart on her lips, and soul within her eyes,
Soft as her clime, and sunny as her skies.

Lord Byron.

ITALY.

FOREVER and forever shalt thou be
Unto the lover and the poet dear,
Thou land of sunlit skies and fountains clear,
Of temples, and gray columns, and waving woods,
And mountains, from whose rifts the bursting floods
Rush in bright tumult to the Adrian sea:
O thou romantic land of Italy!
Mother of painting and sweet sounds! though now
The laurels are all torn from off thy brow,
Yet, though the shape of Freedom now no more
May walk in beauty on thy piny shore,
Shall I, upon whose soul thy poets' lays,
And all thy songs and hundred stories, fell
Like dim Arabian charms, break the soft spell
That bound me to thee in mine earlier days?
Never, divinest Italy, — thou shalt be
For aye the watchword of the heart to me.

Famous thou art, and shalt be through all time:
Not that because thine iron children hurled
Like arrows o'er the conquest-stricken world

Their tyrannies, but that, in a later day,
Great spirits, and gentle too, triumphing came;
And, as the mighty day-star makes its way
From darkness into light, they toward their fame
Went, gathering splendor till they grew sublime.

Yet first of all thy sons were they who wove
Thy silken language into tales of love,
And fairest far the gentle forms that shine
In thy own poets' faery songs divine.
O, long as lips shall smile or pitying tears
Rain from the eyes of beauty, — long as fears
Or doubts or hopes shall sear or soothe the heart,
Or flatteries softly fall on woman's ears,
Or witching words be spoke at twilight hours,
Or tender songs be sung in orange bowers, —
Long as the stars, like ladies' looks, by night
Shall shine, — more constant and almost as bright, —
So long, though hidden in a foreign shroud,
Shall Dante's mighty spirit speak aloud:
So long the lamp of fame on Petrarch's urn
Shall, like the light of learning, duly burn;
And he be loved, — he with his hundred tales,
As varying as the shadowy cloud that sails
Upon the bosom of the April sky,
And musical as when the waters run
Lapsing through sylvan haunts deliciously.
Nor may that gay romancer who hath told
Of knight and damsel and enchantments old,
So well, be e'er forgot; nor he who sung
Of Salem's holy city lost and won,

The seer-like Tasso, who enamoured hung
On Leonora's beauty, and became
Her martyr, — blasted by a mingled flame.

Bryan Waller Procter.

MIGNON.

KNOW'ST thou the land, there where the citron blows?
In darksome leaves the golden orange glows;
A gentle wind from the blue heaven expands,
The myrtle still, and high the laurel stands!
Know'st thou the land? Ah, there, ah, there
Would I with thee, O my beloved, go!

Know'st thou the house? On columns rests its roof;
Glitters the hall, the chambers gleam aloof;
And marble statues stand and gaze at me; —
"What have they done, poor little child, to thee?"
Know'st thou the house? Ah, there, ah, there
Would I with thee, O my protector, go!

Know'st thou the mount, with cloud-enveloped track?
The mule seeks out his way in mist and rack;
In caverns dwells the dragon's ancient brood;
Down leaps the crag, and over it the flood!
Know'st thou the mount? Ah, there, ah, there
Leadeth our road, O father, let us go!

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. Tr. Anon.

THE DAISY.

O LOVE, what hours were thine and mine
In lands of palm and southern pine, —
In lands of palm, of orange-blossom,
Of olive, aloe, and maize and vine.

What Roman strength Turbìa showed
In ruin, by the mountain road;
How like a gem, beneath, the city
Of little Monaco, basking, glowed.

How richly down the rocky dell
The torrent vineyard streaming fell
To meet the sun and sunny waters,
That only heaved with a summer swell.

What slender campanili grew
By bays, the peacock's neck in hue;
Where, here and there, on sandy beaches
A milky-belled amaryllis blew.

How young Columbus seemed to rove,
Yet present in his natal grove,
Now watching high on mountain cornice,
And steering, now, from a purple cove,

Now pacing mute by ocean's rim
Till, in a narrow street and dim,
I stayed the wheels at Cogoletto,
And drank, and loyally drank to him.

Nor knew we well what pleased us most,
Not the clipt palm of which they boast;
  But distant color, happy hamlet,
A mouldered citadel on the coast,

Or tower, or high hill-convent, seen
A light amid its olives green;
  Or olive-hoary cape in ocean;
Or rosy blossom in hot ravine,

Where oleanders flushed the bed
Of silent torrents, gravel-spread;
  And, crossing, oft we saw the glisten
Of ice, far up on a mountain head.

We loved that hall, though white and cold,
Those nichéd shapes of noble mould,
  A princely people's awful princes,
The grave, severe Genovese of old.

At Florence, too, what golden hours
In those long galleries were ours;
  What drives about the fresh Cascinè,
Or walks in Boboli's ducal bowers.

In bright vignettes, and each complete,
Of tower or duomo, sunny-sweet,
  Or palace, how the city glittered,
Through cypress avenues, at our feet.

But when we crost the Lombard plain
Remember what a plague of rain;

Of rain at Reggio, rain at Parma;
At Lodi, rain, Piacenza, rain.

And stern and sad (so rare the smiles
Of sunlight) looked the Lombard piles;
Porch-pillars on the lion resting,
And sombre, old, colonnaded aisles.

O Milan, O the chanting quires,
The giant windows' blazoned fires,
The height, the space, the gloom, the glory!
A mount of marble, a hundred spires!

I climbed the roofs at break of day;
Sun-smitten Alps before me lay.
I stood among the silent statues,
And statued pinnacles, mute as they.

How faintly flushed, how phantom-fair,
Was Monte Rosa hanging there
A thousand shadowy-pencilled valleys
And snowy dells in a golden air.

Remember how we came at last
To Como; shower and storm and blast
Had blown the lake beyond his limit,
And all was flooded; and how we past

From Como, when the light was gray,
And in my head, for half the day,
The rich Virgilian rustic measure
Of Lari Maxume, all the way,

Like ballad-burden music, kept,
As on the Lariano crept
To that fair port below the castle
Of Queen Theodolind, where we slept;

Or hardly slept, but watched awake
A cypress in the moonlight shake,
The moonlight touching o'er a terrace
One tall agavè above the lake.

What more? we took our last adieu,
And up the snowy Splugen drew,
But ere we reached the highest summit
I plucked a daisy, I gave it you.

It told of England then to me,
And now it tells of Italy.
O love, we two shall go no longer
To lands of summer across the sea;

So dear a life your arms enfold
Whose crying is a cry for gold:
Yet here to-night in this dark city,
When ill and weary, alone and cold,

I found, though crushed to hard and dry,
This nursling of another sky
Still in the little book you lent me,
And where you tenderly laid it by:

And I forgot the clouded Forth,
The gloom that saddens heaven and earth,

The bitter east, the misty summer
And gray metropolis of the North.

Perchance to lull the throbs of pain,
Perchance to charm a vacant brain,
Perchance to dream you still beside me,
My fancy fled to the South again.

Alfred Tennyson.

ITALY.

Our Italy 's
The darling of the earth, — the treasury, piled
With reveries of gentle ladies, flung
Aside, like ravelled silk, from life's worn stuff, —
With coins of scholars' fancy, which, being rung
On workday counter, still sound silver-proof, —
In short, with all the dreams of dreamers young,
Before their heads have time for slipping off
Hope's pillow to the ground. How oft, indeed,
We all have sent our souls out from the north,
On bare white feet which would not print nor bleed,
To climb the Alpine passes and look forth,
Where the low murmuring Lombard rivers lead
Their bee-like way to gardens almost worth
The sight which thou and I see afterward
From Tuscan Bellosguardo, wide awake,
When standing on the actual, blessed sward
Where Galileo stood at nights to take
The vision of the stars, we find it hard,
Gazing upon the earth and heaven, to make
A choice of beauty.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning.

ITALY.

ALL is Italian here! — the orange grove,
Through whose cool shade we every morning rove
To pluck its glowing fruit; our villa white
With loggias broad, where far into the night
We sit and breathe the intoxicating air
With orange-blossoms filled, or free from care
In the cool shadow of the morning lie
And dream, and watch the lazy boats go by,
Laden with fruits for Naples, the soft gales
Swelling and straining in their lateen sails,
Or with their canvas hanging all adroop,
While the oars flash, and rowers rise and stoop.
Look at this broad, flat plain heaped full of trees,
With here and there a villa, — these blue seas
Whispering below the sheer cliffs on the shore,
These ochre mountains bare or olived o'er,
The road that clings to them along the coast,
The arching viaducts, the thick vines tost
From tree to tree, that swing with every breeze, —
What can be more Italian than all these?
The streets, too, through whose narrow, dusty track
We ride in files, each on our donkey's back,
When evening's shadow o'er the high gray walls,
O'ertopped with oranges and olives, falls,
And at each corner 'neath its roof of tiles,
Hung with poor offerings, the Madonna smiles
In her rude shrine so picturesque with dirt.

Is this not Italy? Your nerves are hurt
By that expression, — dirt, — nay, then I see
You love not nature, art, nor Italy.

William Wetmore Story.

THROUGH THE ALPINE GATES.

O, SWEET it was, when, from that bleak abode
Where avalanches grind the pines to dust,
And crouching glaciers down the hollows thrust
Their glittering claws, I took the sunward road,
Making my guide the torrent, that before
My steps ran shouting, giddy with its joy,
And tossed its white hands like a gamesome boy,
And sprayed its rainbow frolics o'er and o'er!

Full-orbed, in rosy dusk, the perfect moon
That evening shone: the torrent's noise, afar,
No longer menaced, but with mellow tune
Sang to the twinkle of a silver star,
Above the opening valley. "Italy!"
The moon, the star, the torrent, said to me, —
"Sleep thou in peace, the morning will unbar
These Alpine gates, and give thy world to thee!"

And morning did unfold the jutting capes
Of chestnut-wooded hills, that held embayed
Warm coves of fruit, the pine's Æolian shade,
Or pillared bowers, blue with suspended grapes; —
A land whose forms some livelier grace betrayed;
Where motion sang and cheerful color laughed,

And only gloomed, amid the dancing shapes
Of vine and bough, the pointed cypress-shaft!

On, — on, through broadening vale and brightening sun
I walked, and hoary in their old repose
The olives twinkled: many a terrace rose,
With marbles crowned and jasmine overrun,
And orchards where the ivory silkworm spun.
On leafy palms outspread, its pulpy fruit
The fig-tree held; and last, the charm to close,
A dark-eyed shepherd piped a reedy flute.

My heart beat loud: I walked as in a dream
Where simplest actions, touched with marvel, seem
Enchanted yet familiar: for I knew
The orchards, terraces, and breathing flowers,
The tree from Adam's garden, and the blue
Sweet sky behind the light aerial towers;
And that young faun that piped, had piped before, —
I knew my home: the exile now was o'er!

And when the third rich day declined his lids,
I floated where the emerald waters fold
Gem-gardens, fairy island-pyramids,
Whereon the orange hangs his globes of gold, —
Which aloes crown with white, colossal plume,
Above the beds where lavish Nature bids
Her sylphs of odor endless revel hold,
Her zones of flowers in balmy congress bloom!

I hailed them all, and hailed beyond, the plain;
The palace-fronts, on distant hills uplift,

White as the morning star; the streams that drift
In sandy channels to the Adrian main:
Till one still eve, with duplicated stain
Of crimson sky and wave, disclosed to me
The domes of Venice, anchored on the sea,
Far off, — an airy city of the brain!

Forth from the shores of Earth we seemed to float,
Drawn by that vision, — hardly felt the breeze
That left one glassy ripple from the boat
To break the smoothness of the silken seas;
And far and near, as from the lucent air,
Came vesper chimes and wave-born melodies.
So might one die, if Death his soul could bear
So gently, heaven before him float so fair!

Bayard Taylor.

LINES

WRITTEN BETWEEN VENICE AND MILAN, AFTER SEEING LAKE GARDA AND THE DISTANT ALPS.

VENICE lay dreaming in the morning light,
Her fairy towers reflected in the wave;
As the dim islands faded from our sight,
One backward look we gave, —

Then on! where duty calls, and smiling home
Her arms spreads forth the errant ones to greet!
Dear faces rise beyond the ocean foam,
And rest and peace are sweet.

But I must leave thee, Italy! To-day
Thou didst put on thy brightest smiles for me, —

Mountain, and lake, and vine-clad valley lay
Wrapped in an azure sea;

While, floating in the magic atmosphere,
Like a mirage I saw thy beauty rise,
And loveliest as the parting hour drew near,
Thou didst enchant mine eyes!

Thus in my heart I bear thee, stamped in light,
Thine image leaves me not, where'er I go, —
The shimmering lake, the mountains, height o'er height
Heaven-crowned with radiant snow.

Those Alps! whose secrets I shall never see,
In whose blue depths such hidden glories lie, —
Like the calm summits of futurity,
They rise against the sky!

On the horizon of my thought they stand, —
A barrier, yet an inspiration, too!
Beyond those heights there lies a lovelier land
Than poet ever drew.

Beyond, — ah yes! I linger on the word, —
Whate'er of earthly happiness we miss,
Still is the yearning soul more deeply stirred
By hopes of future bliss!

I seek not to attain, I but aspire!
I yearn for joy no fleeting moment gives, —
The soul grows great through infinite desire,
In what it longs for, lives!

Florence Smith.

GARIBALDI AND ITALY.

O LONG desired by many a weary age,
Besought in prayer by many a martyred sage!
While earth with pride thy footsteps doth upbear, —
Thy country's hope, for thou know'st not despair, —
Italia's true deliverer! soon thy star,
Though dimmed by Northern clouds, shall shine afar!
The tyrant priest, a Roman but in name,
Who now exults and glories in the shame
His country bears, may yet give place to thee,
To purer worship and to liberty;
And Gauls, who seek thy land to re-enslave,
May find its soil, as oft before, their grave.

Three empires, O Italia, thou hast swayed:
First, when thy Cæsar's laws the world obeyed;
And next, when, trembling at his proud command,
Monarchs obeyed imperious Hildebrand;
Last, when thy genius lit her torch again,
And won dominion o'er the minds of men.
These lost, men deemed thee sunk in slow decay,
And thought thy greatness wholly passed away;
But, soon or late, Time hath in store for thee —
Land of the Adrian and Tyrrhenian sea,
Crowned by the Alps, and ribbed by Apennine —
A brighter age than ever yet was thine!

While burns the light that shone o'er all the West,
Rekindled, first, at Petrarch's high behest;

While Freedom lives, that, rising from her tomb,
Resumed her ancient life and power and bloom
On that great day when ebbed the Northern tide,
And Lombard cities broke the German's pride, —
Land of Columbus, fairest Italy,
Columbia's eyes shall still be turned on thee!
Still will we trust that Dante's prophet soul,
And, bright with fame, the innumerable roll
Of thine immortal dead, (e'en such as rest,
O Santa Croce, on thy sacred breast!) —
Foretokened, in thy night, the dawning day,
When, like a dream, thy foes shall pass away.

Can nation-building Cavour's work be lost?
No! though by devious paths thy way be crost,
Italia! thou shalt yet attain the prize
Of honored peace, that clear before thee lies!

Anonymous.

LINES ON LEAVING ITALY.

ONCE more among the old gigantic hills
With vapors clouded o'er;
The vales of Lombardy grow dim behind,
The rocks ascend before.

They beckon me, the giants, from afar,
They wing my footsteps on;
Their helms of ice, their plumage of the pine,
Their cuirasses of stone.

My heart beats high, my breath comes freer forth,—
Why should my heart be sore?
I hear the eagle and the vulture's cry,
The nightingale's no more.

Where is the laurel, where the myrtle's blossom?
Bleak is the path around:
Where from the thicket comes the ringdove's cooing?
Hoarse is the torrent's sound.

Yet should I grieve, when from my loaded bosom
A weight appears to flow?
Methinks the Muses come to call me home
From yonder rocks of snow.

I know not how, but in yon land of roses
My heart was heavy still,
I startled at the warbling nightingale,
The zephyr on the hill.

They said the stars shone with a softer gleam,—
It seemed not so to me;
In vain a scene of beauty beamed around,
My thoughts were o'er the sea.

Adam Gottlob Oehlenschläger. Tr. Anon.

FAREWELL TO ITALY.

FAREWELL to the Land of the South!
Farewell to the lovely clime,
Where the sunny valleys smile in light,
And the piny mountains climb!
Farewell to her bright blue seas!
Farewell to her fervid skies!
O, many and deep are the thoughts which crowd
On the sinking heart, while it sighs,
"Farewell to the Land of the South!"

As the look of a face beloved,
Was that bright land to me!
It enchanted my sense, it sank on my heart
Like music's witchery!
In every kindling pulse
I felt the genial air,
For life is life in that sunny clime,
'T is death of life elsewhere:
Farewell to the Land of the South!

The poet's splendid dreams
Have hallowed each grove and hill,
And the beautiful forms of ancient Faith
Are lingering round us still.
And the spirits of other days,
Invoked by fancy's spell,
Are rolled before the kindling thought,

While we breathe our last farewell
To the glorious Land of the South!

A long, a last adieu,
Romantic Italy!
Thou land of beauty and love and song,
As once of the brave and free!
Alas for thy golden fields!
Alas for thy classic shore!
Alas for thy orange and myrtle bowers!
I shall never behold them more, —
Farewell to the Land of the South!

Anna Jameson.

ITALY.

Alban Hills.

THE VILLA.

OUR villa, perhaps, you never have seen;
It lies on the slope of the Alban hill;
Lifting its white face, sunny and still,
Out of the olives' pale gray green,
That, far away as the eye can go,
Stretch up behind it, row upon row.
There, in the garden, the cypresses, stirred
By the sifting winds, half musing talk,
And the cool, fresh, constant voice is heard
Of the fountains spilling in every walk.
There stately the oleanders grow,
And one long gray wall is aglow
With golden oranges burning between
Their dark stiff leaves of sombre green,
And there are hedges all clipped and square,
As carven from blocks of malachite,
Where fountains keep spinning their threads of light,
And statues whiten the shadow there.

And, if the sun too fiercely shine,
And one would creep from its noonday glare,
There are galleries dark, where ilexes twine
Their branchy roofs above the head.
Or when at twilight the heats decline,
If one but cross the terraces,
And lean o'er the marble balustrade,
Between the vases whose aloes high
Show their sharp pike-heads against the sky,
What a sight — Madonna mia — he sees!
There stretches our great campagna beneath,
And seems to breathe a rosy breath
Of light and mist, as in peace it sleeps, —
And summery thunder-clouds of rain,
With their slanting spears, run over the plain,
And rush at the ruins, or, routed, fly
To the mountains that lift their barriers high,
And stand with their purple pits of shades
Split by the sharp-edged limestone blades,
With opaline lights and tender grades
Of color, that flicker and swoon and die,
Built up like a wall against the sky.

William Wetmore Story.

MONTE SACRO.

The Sacred Mount,
Crowned with the citadel of Latin Jove,
Hangs o'er Alba's Lake, and o'er the towers
Older than Rome, their daughter. On its slopes

Aricia smiles, and stately Tusculum.
Beneath us Gabii, and, in shrouded sheen,
Regillus, famed for Tarquin's overthrow.
Northward leans Tibur o'er her cataract, —
Fortress of Sabine wars. Fidenæ there,
And farther, Veii melts into the shade.

John Nichol.

Amalfi.

AMALFI.

THERE would I linger, then go forth again;
And he who steers due east, doubling the cape,
Discovers, in a crevice of the rock,
The fishing-town, Amalfi. Haply there
A heaving bark, an anchor on the strand,
May tell him what it is; but what it was,
Cannot be told so soon.
The time has been,
When on the quays along the Syrian coast,
'T was asked and eagerly, at break of dawn,
"What ships are from Amalfi?" when her coins,
Silver and gold, circled from clime to clime;
From Alexandria southward to Sennaar,
And eastward, through Damascus and Cabul
And Samarcand, to thy great wall, Cathay.
Then were the nations by her wisdom swayed;
And every crime on every sea was judged
According to her judgments. In her port

Prows, strange, uncouth, from Nile and Niger met,
People of various feature, various speech;
And in their countries many a house of prayer,
And many a shelter, where no shelter was,
And many a well, like Jacob's in the wild,
Rose at her bidding. Then in Palestine,
By the wayside, in sober grandeur stood
A hospital, that, night and day, received
The pilgrims of the west; and, when 't was asked,
"Who are the noble founders?" every tongue
At once replied, "The merchants of Amalfi."
That hospital, when Godfrey scaled the walls,
Sent forth its holy men in complete steel;
And hence, the cowl relinquished for the helm,
That chosen band, valiant, invincible,
So long renowned as champions of the Cross,
In Rhodes, in Malta.

For three hundred years
There, unapproached but from the deep, they dwelt;
Assailed forever, yet from age to age
Acknowledging no master. From the deep
They gathered in their harvests; bringing home,
In the same ship, relics of ancient Greece,
That land of glory where their fathers lay,
Grain from the golden vales of Sicily,
And Indian spices. Through the civilized world
Their credit was ennobled into fame;
And when at length they fell, they left mankind
A legacy, compared with which the wealth
Of Eastern kings, what is it in the scale? —
The mariner's compass.

Samuel Rogers.

AT AMALFI.

IT is the mid-May sun that, rayless and peacefully gleaming,
Out of its night's short prison this blessed of lands is redeeming;
It is the fire evoked from the hearts of the citron and orange,
So that they hang, like lamps of the day, translucently beaming;
It is the veinless water, and air unsoiled by a vapor,
Save what, out of the fulness of life, from the valley is steaming;
It is the olive that smiles, even he, the sad growth of the moonlight,
Over the flowers, whose breasts triple-folded with odors are teeming; —
Yes, it is these bright births that to me are a shame and an anguish;
They are alive and awake, — I dream, and know I am dreaming;
I cannot bathe my soul in this ocean of passion and beauty, —
Not one dewdrop is on me of all that about me is streaming;
O, I am thirsty for life, — I pant for the freshness of nature,
Bound in the world's dead sleep, dried up by its treacherous seeming.

Lord Houghton.

AMALFI.

SWEET the memory is to me
Of a land beyond the sea,
Where the waves and mountains meet,
Where amid her mulberry-trees
Sits Amalfi in the heat,
Bathing ever her white feet
In the tideless summer seas.

In the middle of the town,
From its fountains in the hills,
Tumbling through the narrow gorge,
The Canneto rushes down,
Turns the great wheels of the mills,
Lifts the hammers of the forge.

'T is a stairway, not a street,
That ascends the deep ravine,
Where the torrent leaps between
Rocky walls that almost meet.
Toiling up from stair to stair
Peasant girls their burdens bear;
Sunburnt daughters of the soil,
Stately figures tall and straight,
What inexorable fate
Dooms them to this life of toil?

Lord of vineyards and of lands,
Far above the convent stands.

On its terraced walk aloof
Leans a monk with folded hands,
Placid, satisfied, serene,
Looking down upon the scene
Over wall and red-tiled roof;
Wondering unto what good end
All this toil and traffic tend,
And why all men cannot be
Free from care and free from pain,
And the sordid love of gain,
And as indolent as he.

Where are now the freighted barks
From the marts of east and west;
Where the knights in iron sarks
Journeying to the Holy Land,
Glove of steel upon the hand,
Cross of crimson on the breast?
Where the pomp of camp and court?
Where the pilgrims with their prayers?
Where the merchants with their wares,
And their gallant brigantines
Sailing safely into port
Chased by corsair Algerines?

Vanished like a fleet of cloud,
Like a passing trumpet-blast,
Are those splendors of the past,
And the commerce and the crowd!
Fathoms deep beneath the seas
Lie the ancient wharves and quays,

Swallowed by the engulfing waves;
Silent streets and vacant halls,
Ruined roofs and towers and walls;
Hidden from all mortal eyes
Deep the sunken city lies:
Even cities have their graves!

This is an enchanted land!
Round the headlands far away
Sweeps the blue Salernian bay
With its sickle of white sand:
Further still and furthermost
On the dim discovered coast
Pæstum with its ruins lies,
And its roses all in bloom
Seem to tinge the fatal skies
Of that lonely land of doom.

On his terrace, high in air,
Nothing doth the good monk care
For such worldly themes as these.
From the garden just below
Little puffs of perfume blow,
And a sound is in his ears
Of the murmur of the bees
In the shining chestnut-trees;
Nothing else he heeds or hears.
All the landscape seems to swoon
In the happy afternoon;
Slowly o'er his senses creep
The encroaching waves of sleep,

And he sinks, as sank the town,
Unresisting, fathoms down,
Into caverns cool and deep!

Walled about with drifts of snow,
Hearing the fierce north-wind blow,
Seeing all the landscape white,
And the river cased in ice,
Comes this memory of delight,
Comes this vision unto me
Of a long-lost Paradise,
In the land beyond the sea.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

Apennines, The.

PASSAGE OF THE APENNINES.

LISTEN, listen, Mary mine,
To the whisper of the Apennine;
It bursts on the roof like the thunder's roar,
Or like the sea on a northern shore,
Heard in its raging ebb and flow
By the captives pent in the cave below.
The Apennine in the light of day
Is a mighty mountain dim and gray,
Which between the earth and sky doth lay;

But when night comes, a chaos dread
On the dim starlight then is spread,
And the Apennine walks abroad with the storm.

Percy Bysshe Shelley.

TO THE APENNINES.

YOUR peaks are beautiful, ye Apennines!
In the soft light of these serenest skies;
From the broad highland region, black with pines,
Fair as the hills of Paradise they rise,
Bathed in the tint Peruvian slaves behold
In rosy flushes on the virgin gold.

There, rooted to the aerial shelves that wear
The glory of a brighter world, might spring
Sweet flowers of heaven to scent the unbreathed air,
And heaven's fleet messengers might rest the wing,
To view the fair earth in its summer sleep,
Silent, and cradled by the glimmering deep.

Below you lie men's sepulchres, the old
Etrurian tombs, the graves of yesterday;
The herd's white bones lie mixed with human mould, —
Yet up the radiant steeps that I survey
Death never climbed, nor life's soft breath, with pain,
Was yielded to the elements again.

Ages of war have filled these plains with fear:
How oft the hind has started at the clash
Of spears, and yell of meeting armies here,
Or seen the lightning of the battle flash

From clouds, that, rising with the thunder's sound,
Hung like an earth-born tempest o'er the ground!

Ah me! what armed nations — Asian horde
And Lybian host, the Scythian and the Gaul —
Have swept your base and through your passes poured,
Like ocean-tides uprising at the call
Of tyrant winds, — against your rocky side
The bloody billows dashed, and howled, and died.

How crashed the towers before beleaguering foes,
Sacked cities smoked, and realms were rent in twain;
And commonwealths against their rivals rose,
Trode out their lives, and earned the curse of Cain!
While in the noiseless air and light that flowed
Round your far brows, eternal Peace abode.

Here pealed the impious hymn, and altar flames
Rose to false gods, a dream-begotten throng,
Jove, Bacchus, Pan, and earlier, fouler names;
While, as the unheeding ages passed along,
Ye, from your station in the middle skies,
Proclaimed the essential Goodness, strong and wise.

In you the heart that sighs for freedom seeks
Her image; there the winds no barrier know,
Clouds come, and rest, and leave your fairy peaks;
While even the immaterial Mind, below,
And Thought, her winged offspring, chained by power,
Pine silently for the redeeming hour.

William Cullen Bryant.

THE ASCENT OF THE APENNINES.

THE plains recede; the olives dwindle:
The ilex and chestnut are left behind:
The skirts of the billowy pinewoods kindle
In the evening lights and the wind.
Not here we sigh for the Alpine glory
Of peak primeval and death-pale snow:
Not here for the cold green, and glacier hoary,
Or the blue caves that yawn below.
The landscape here is mature and mellow;
Fruit-like, not flower-like; — long hills embrowned;
Gradations of violet purple and yellow
From flushed stream to ridge church-crowned:
'T is a region of mystery, hushed and sainted:
As still as the dreams of those artists old
When the thoughts of Dante his Giotto painted: —
The summit is reached! Behold!
Like a sky condensed lies the lake far down;
It curves like the orbit of some fair planet!
A fire-wreath falls on the cliffs that frown
Above it, — dark walls of granite!
Thick-set, like an almond tree newly budded,
The hillsides with homesteads and hamlets glow:
With convent towers are the red rocks studded,
With villages zoned below.
Down drops by the island's woody shores
The bannered barge with its rhythmic oars.

Aubrey de Vere.

Arno, the River.

THE RIVER ARNO.

AND I: "Through midst of Tuscany there wanders
A streamlet that is born in Falterona,
And not a hundred miles of course suffice it;
From thereupon do I this body bring.
To tell you who I am were speech in vain,
Because my name as yet makes no great noise."
"If well thy meaning I can penetrate
With intellect of mine," then answered me
He who first spake, "thou speakest of the Arno."
And said the other to him: "Why concealed
This one the appellation of that river,
Even as a man doth of things horrible?"
And thus the shade that questioned was of this
Himself acquitted: "I know not; but truly
'T is fit the name of such a valley perish;
For from its fountain-head (where is so pregnant
The Alpine mountain whence is cleft Peloro
That in few places it that mark surpasses)
To where it yields itself in restoration
Of what the heaven doth of the sea dry up,
Whence have the rivers that which goes with them,
Virtue is like an enemy avoided
By all, as is a serpent, through misfortune
Of place, or through bad habit that impels them;
On which account have so transformed their nature

The dwellers in that miserable valley,
It seems that Circe had them in her pasture.
Mid ugly swine,[1] of acorns worthier
Than other food for human use created,
It first directeth its impoverished way.
Curs[2] findeth it thereafter, coming downward,
More snarling than their puissance demands,
And turns from them disdainfully its muzzle.
It goes on falling, and the more it grows,
The more it finds the dogs becoming wolves,[3]
This maledict and misadventurous ditch.
Descended then through many a hollow gulf,
It findeth foxes[4] so replete with fraud,
They fear no cunning that may master them.
Nor will I cease because another hears me;
And well 't will be for him, if still he mind him
Of what a truthful spirit to me unravels.
Thy grandson I behold, who doth become
A hunter of those wolves upon the bank
Of the wild stream, and terrifies them all.
He sells their flesh, it being yet alive;
Thereafter slaughters them like ancient beeves;
Many of life, himself of praise, deprives.
Blood-stained he issues from the dismal forest;
He leaves it such, a thousand years from now
In its primeval state 't is not re-wooded."

Dante Alighieri. Tr. H. W. Longfellow.

1 The Casentines.
2 The Aretines.
3 The Florentines.
4 The Pisans.

Arona.

STANZAS

ADDRESSED TO W. R. TURNER, R. A., ON HIS VIEW OF THE LAGO MAGGIORE FROM THE TOWN OF ARONA.

TURNER, thy pencil brings to mind a day
When from Laveno and the Beuscer Hill
I over Lake Verbanus held my way
In pleasant fellowship, with wind at will;
Smooth were the waters wide, the sky serene,
And our hearts gladdened with the joyful scene;—

Joyful, for all things ministered delight,—
The lake and land, the mountains and the vales;
The Alps their snowy summits reared in light,
Tempering with gelid breath the summer gales;
And verdant shores and woods refreshed the eye,
That else had ached beneath that brilliant sky.

To that elaborate island were we bound,
Of yore the scene of Borromean pride,—
Folly's prodigious work; where all around,
Under its coronet, and self-belied,
Look where you will, you cannot choose but see
The obtrusive motto's proud "Humility!"

Far off the Borromean saint was seen,
Distinct, though distant, o'er his native town,

Where his Colossus with benignant mien
Looks from its station on Arona down;
To it the inland sailor lifts his eyes,
From the wide lake, when perilous storms arise.

But no storm threatened on that summer day;
The whole rich scene appeared for joyance made;
With many a gliding bark the mere was gay,
The fields and groves in all their wealth arrayed:
I could have thought the sun beheld with smiles
Those towns and palaces and populous isles.

From fair Arona, even on such a day,
When gladness was descending like a shower,
Great painter, did thy gifted eye survey
The splendid scene; and, conscious of its power,
Well hath thine hand inimitable given
The glories of the lake and land and heaven.

Robert Southey.

THE STATUE OF ST. CARLO BORROMEO.

TRUE fame is this, — through love, and love alone,
To stand thus honored where we first saw day;
True puissance this, — the hand of lawful sway
In love alone to lift, that hand whereon,
Dove-like, Eternal Peace hath fixed her throne,
And whence her blessing wings o'er earth its way;
True rule to God belongs. Who share it? They
Through whom God's gifts on humankind are strewn.
Bless thus thy natal place, great Priest, forever!

And thou, Arona, by thy placid bay,
Second thy sleepless shepherd's mute endeavor.
The choice is thine, if that high Grace, like showers
Of sunbeams rained on all thy hearths and bowers,
Shall feed thy growth or quicken thy decay!

Aubrey de Vere.

Arquà.

ON THE TOMB OF PETRARCA.

"YE consecrated marbles, proud and dear,
Blest, that the noblest Tuscan ye infold,
And in your walls his holy ashes hold,
Who, dying, left none greater, none his peer;
Since I, with pious hand, with soul sincere,
Can send on high no costly perfumed fold
Of frankincense, and o'er the sacred mould
Where Petrarch lies no gorgeous altars rear,
O, scorn it not, if humbly I impart
My grateful offering to these lovely shades,
Here bending low in singleness of mind!"
Lilies and violets sprinkling to the wind,
Thus Damon prays, while the bright hills and glades
Murmur, "The gift is small, but rich the heart."

Benedetto Varchi. Tr. Anon.

PETRARCH'S TOMB.

THERE is a tomb in Arqua; — reared in air,
Pillared in their sarcophagus, repose
The bones of Laura's lover; here repair
Many familiar with his well-sung woes,
The pilgrims of his genius. He arose
To raise a language, and his land reclaim
From the dull yoke of her barbaric foes;
Watering the tree which bears his lady's name
With his melodious tears, he gave himself to fame.

They keep his dust in Arqua, where he died;
The mountain-village where his latter days
Went down the vale of years; and 't is their pride, —
An honest pride, — and let it be their praise,
To offer to the passing stranger's gaze
His mansion and his sepulchre; both plain
And venerably simple, such as raise
A feeling more accordant with his strain
Than if a pyramid formed his monumental fane.

And the soft hamlet where he dwelt
Is one of that complexion which seems made
For those who their mortality have felt,
And sought a refuge from their hopes decayed
In the deep umbrage of a green hill's shade,
Which shows a distant prospect far away
Of busy cities, now in vain displayed,

For they can lure no further; and the ray
Of a bright sun can make sufficient holiday,

Developing the mountains, leaves, and flowers,
And shining in the brawling brook, whereby,
Clear as its current, glide the sauntering hours
With a calm languor, which, though to the eye
Idlesse it seem, hath its morality.
If from society we learn to live,
'T is solitude should teach us how to die;
It hath no flatterers; vanity can give
No hollow aid; alone man with his God must strive.

Lord Byron.

ARQUÀ.

THREE leagues from Padua stands and long has stood
(The Paduan student knows it, honors it)
A lonely tomb beside a mountain-church;
And I arrived there as the sun declined
Low in the west. The gentle airs, that breathe
Fragrance at eve, were rising, and the birds
Singing their farewell song, — the very song
They sung the night that tomb received a tenant;
When, as alive, clothed in his canon's stole,
And slowly winding down the narrow path,
He came to rest there. Nobles of the land,
Princes and prelates mingled in his train,
Anxious by any act, while yet they could,
To catch a ray of glory by reflection;

And from that hour have kindred spirits flocked
From distant countries, from the north, the south,
To see where he is laid.
Twelve years ago,
When I descended the impetuous Rhone,
Its vineyards of such great and old renown,
Its castles, each with some romantic tale,
Vanishing fast, — the pilot at the stern,
He who had steered so long, standing aloft,
His eyes on the white breakers, and his hands
On what was now his rudder, now his oar,
A huge misshapen plank, — the bark itself
Frail and uncouth, launched to return no more,
Such as a shipwrecked man might hope to build,
Urged by the love of home. Twelve years ago,
When like an arrow from the cord we flew,
Two long, long days, silence, suspense on board,
It was to offer at thy fount, Vaucluse,
Entering the arched cave, to wander where
Petrarch had wandered, to explore and sit
Where in his peasant-dress he loved to sit,
Musing, reciting, — on some rock moss-grown,
Or the fantastic root of some old beech,
That drinks the living waters as they stream
Over their emerald-bed; and could I now
Neglect the place where, in a graver mood,
When he had done and settled with the world,
When all the illusions of his youth were fled,
Indulged perhaps too much, cherished too long,
He came for the conclusion? Half-way up
He built his house, whence as by stealth he caught,

Among the hills, a glimpse of busy life
That soothed, not stirred. But knock, and enter in.
This was his chamber. 'T is as when he went;
As if he now were in his orchard-grove.
And this his closet. Here he sat and read.
This was his chair; and in it, unobserved,
Reading, or thinking of his absent friends,
He passed away as in a quiet slumber.
Peace to this region! Peace to each, to all!
They know his value, — every coming step,
That draws the gazing children from their play,
Would tell them if they knew not. But could aught
Ungentle or ungenerous spring up
Where he is sleeping; where, and in an age
Of savage warfare and blind bigotry,
He cultured all that could refine, exalt;
Leading to better things?

Samuel Rogers.

WRITTEN IN PETRARCH'S HOUSE.

PETRARCH! I would that there might be
In this thy household sanctuary
No visible monument of thee:

The fount that whilom played before thee,
The roof that rose in shelter o'er thee,
The low fair hills that still adore thee, —

I would no more; thy memory
Must loathe all cold reality,
Thought-worship only is for thee.

They say thy tomb lies there below;
What want I with the marble show?
I am content, — I will not go:

For though by poesy's high grace
Thou saw'st, in thy calm resting-place,
God, love, and nature face to face;

Yet now that thou art wholly free,
How can it give delight to see
That sign of thy captivity?

Lord Houghton.

Aspromonte.

GARIBALDI.

HIGH on Aspromonte flashed the red shirts early,
Up in the midst of them the glory of his face,
Low on Aspromonte, ere the day was over,
He was down and bleeding, bound in helpless case.
Hands of brothers poured that crimson, — nevermore
Tears can wash it from the holy Tricolor.
Alas! alas! could they hit him where he stood,
Himself thrown between the ranks, with passionate cries
Calling on them but to spare each other's blood,
And so, falling, gave himself a sacrifice.
O the pity and the passion of that morrow,
When, all lost, all ended, he the invincible

Lay there stricken in his ruin and his sorrow,
Prisoner in the hands of those he loved too well.

Over rugged mountain-paths without complaint
Carried through long hours of torture, white and faint,
By the faithful, silent in his silence all,
Marching slow and soft as at a funeral.
Overhead all day the scorching August quivered,
While the laurel leaves looked sadness, shading him,
As they bore him from the land he had delivered,
Helpless, shattered, hot with anguish heart and limb;
No salute or sign or murmur as he passed;
But once, looking up, he waved his hand at last:
Farewell! — kneeling on the shore the people shivered,
Stretching out their hands long after the white sails had grown dim.

Anonymous.

Assisi.

THE SERMON OF ST. FRANCIS.

UP soared the lark into the air,
A shaft of song, a winged prayer,
As if a soul, released from pain,
Were flying back to heaven again.

St. Francis heard; it was to him
An emblem of the Seraphim;

The upward motion of the fire,
The light, the heat, the heart's desire.

Around Assisi's convent gate
The birds, God's poor who cannot wait,
From moor and mere and darksome wood
Came flocking for their dole of food.

"O brother birds," St. Francis said,
"Ye come to me and ask for bread,
But not with bread alone to-day
Shall ye be fed and sent away.

"Ye shall be fed, ye happy birds,
With manna of celestial words;
Not mine, though mine they seem to be,
Not mine, though they be spoken through me.

"O, doubly are ye bound to praise
The great Creator in your lays;
He giveth you your plumes of down,
Your crimson hoods, your cloaks of brown.

"He giveth you your wings to fly
And breathe a purer air on high,
And careth for you everywhere,
Who for yourselves so little care!"

With flutter of swift wings and songs
Together rose the feathered throngs,
And singing scattered far apart;
Deep peace was in St. Francis' heart.

He knew not if the brotherhood
His homily had understood;
He only knew that to one ear
The meaning of his words was clear.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

Atri.

THE BELL OF ATRI.

AT Atri in Abruzzo, a small town
Of ancient Roman date, but scant renown,
One of those little places that have run
Half up the hill, beneath a blazing sun,
And then sat down to rest, as if to say,
"I climb no farther upward, come what may,"
The Re Giovanni, now unknown to fame,
So many monarchs since have borne the name,
Had a great bell hung in the market-place
Beneath a roof, projecting some small space,
By way of shelter from the sun and rain.
Then rode he through the streets with all his train,
And, with the blast of trumpets loud and long,
Made proclamation, that whenever wrong
Was done to any man, he should but ring
The great bell in the square, and he, the king,
Would cause the Syndic to decide thereon.
Such was the proclamation of King John.

How swift the happy days in Atri sped,
What wrongs were righted, need not here be said.
Suffice it that, as all things must decay,
The hempen rope at length was worn away,
Unravelled at the end, and, strand by strand,
Loosened and wasted in the ringer's hand,
Till one, who noted this in passing by,
Mended the rope with braids of briony,
So that the leaves and tendrils of the vine
Hung like a votive garland at a shrine.

By chance it happened that in Atri dwelt
A knight, with spur on heel and sword in belt,
Who loved to hunt the wild-boar in the woods,
Who loved his falcons with their crimson hoods,
Who loved his hounds and horses, and all sports
And prodigalities of camps and courts; —
Loved, or had loved them; for at last, grown old,
His only passion was the love of gold.

He sold his horses, sold his hawks and hounds,
Rented his vineyards and his garden-grounds,
Kept but one steed, his favorite steed of all,
To starve and shiver in a naked stall,
And day by day sat brooding in his chair,
Devising plans how best to hoard and spare.

At length he said: "What is the use or need
To keep at my own cost this lazy steed,
Eating his head off in my stables here,
When rents are low and provender is dear?

Let him go feed upon the public ways;
I want him only for the holidays."
So the old steed was turned into the heat
Of the long, lonely, silent, shadeless street;
And wandered in suburban lanes forlorn,
Barked at by dogs, and torn by brier and thorn.

One afternoon, as in that sultry clime
It is the custom in the summer time,
With bolted doors and window-shutters closed,
The inhabitants of Atri slept or dozed;
When suddenly upon their senses fell
The loud alarum of the accusing bell!
The Syndic started from his deep repose,
Turned on his couch, and listened, and then rose
And donned his robes, and with reluctant pace
Went panting forth into the market-place,
Where the great bell upon its cross-beam swung
Reiterating with persistent tongue,
In half-articulate jargon, the old song:
"Some one hath done a wrong, hath done a wrong!"

But ere he reached the belfry's light arcade
He saw, or thought he saw, beneath its shade,
No shape of human form of woman born,
But a poor steed dejected and forlorn,
Who with uplifted head and eager eye
Was tugging at the vines of briony.
"Domeneddio!" cried the Syndic straight,
"This is the Knight of Atri's steed of state!
He calls for justice, being sore distressed,
And pleads his cause as loudly as the best."

Meanwhile from street and lane a noisy crowd
Had rolled together like a summer cloud,
And told the story of the wretched beast
In five-and-twenty different ways at least,
With much gesticulation and appeal
To heathen gods, in their excessive zeal.
The Knight was called and questioned; in reply
Did not confess the fact, did not deny;
Treated the matter as a pleasant jest,
And set at naught the Syndic and the rest,
Maintaining, in an angry undertone,
That he should do what pleased him with his own.

And thereupon the Syndic gravely read
The proclamation of the King; then said:
"Pride goeth forth on horseback grand and gay,
But cometh back on foot, and begs its way;
Fame is the fragrance of heroic deeds,
Of flowers of chivalry and not of weeds!
These are familiar proverbs; but I fear
They never yet have reached your knightly ear.
What fair renown, what honor, what repute
Can come to you from starving this poor brute?
He who serves well and speaks not, merits more
Than they who clamor loudest at the door.
Therefore the law decrees that as this steed
Served you in youth, henceforth you shall take heed
To comfort his old age, and to provide
Shelter in stall, and food and field beside."

The Knight withdrew abashed; the people all
Led home the steed in triumph to his stall.

The King heard and approved, and laughed in glee,
And cried aloud: "Right well it pleaseth me!
Church-bells at best but ring us to the door;
But go not in to mass; my bell doth more:
It cometh into court and pleads the cause
Of creatures dumb and unknown to the laws;
And this shall make, in every Christian clime,
The Bell of Atri famous for all time."

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

Baja (Baiæ).

BAIÆ.

THERE Baiæ sees no more the joyous throng;
Her bank all beaming with the pride of Rome:
No generous vines now bask along the hills,
Where sport the breezes of the Tyrrhene main:
With baths and temples mixed, no villas rise;
Nor, art sustained amid reluctant waves,
Draw the cool murmurs of the breathing deep:
No spreading ports their sacred arms extend:
No mighty moles the big intrusive storm,
From the calm station, roll resounding back.
An almost total desolation sits,
A dreary stillness saddening o'er the coast;
Where, when soft suns and tepid winters rose,
Rejoicing clouds inhaled the balm of peace;
Where citied hill to hill reflected blaze;

And where, with Ceres Bacchus wont to hold
A genial strife. Her youthful form, robust,
E'en Nature yields; by fire and earthquake rent:
Whole stately cities in the dark abrupt
Swallowed at once, or vile in rubbish laid,
A nest for serpents; from the red abyss
New hills, explosive, thrown; the Lucrine lake
A reedy pool: and all to Cuma's point,
The sea recovering his usurped domain,
And poured triumphant o'er the buried dome.

James Thomson.

RUINS OF CORNELIA'S HOUSE.

I TURN from ruins of imperial power,
Tombs of corrupt delight, old walls the pride
Of statesmen pleased for respite brief to hide
Their laurelled foreheads in the Muses' bower,
And seek Cornelia's home. At sunset's hour
How oft her eyes, that wept no more, descried
Yon purpling hills! How oft she heard that tide
Fretting as now low cave or hollow tower!
The mother of the Gracchi! Scipio's child!—
'T was virtue such as hers that built her Rome!
Never towards it she gazed! Far off her home
She made, like her great father self-exiled.
Woe to the nations when the souls they bare,
Their best and bravest, choose their rest elsewhere!

Aubrey de Vere.

Bologna.

BOLOGNA.

'T WAS night; the noise and bustle of the day
Were o'er. The mountebank no longer wrought
Miraculous cures, — he and his stage were gone;
And he who, when the crisis of his tale
Came, and all stood breathless with hope and fear,
Sent round his cap; and he who thrummed his wire
And sang, with pleading look and plaintive strain
Melting the passenger. Thy thousand cries,
So well portrayed, and by a son of thine,
Whose voice had swelled the hubbub in his youth,
Were hushed, Bologna, — silence in the streets,
The squares, when, hark, the clattering of fleet hoofs;
And soon a courier, posting as from far,
Housing and holster, boot and belted coat
And doublet, stained with many a various soil,
Stopt and alighted. 'T was where hangs aloft
That ancient sign, the pilgrim, welcoming
All who arrive there, all perhaps save those
Clad like himself, with staff and scallop-shell,
Those on a pilgrimage. And now approached
Wheels, through the lofty porticos resounding,
Arch beyond arch, a shelter or a shade
As the sky changes. To the gate they came;
And, ere the man had half his story done,
Mine host received the Master, — one long used

To sojourn among strangers, everywhere
(Go where he would, along the wildest track)
Flinging a charm that shall not soon be lost,
And leaving footsteps to be traced by those
Who love the haunts of genius; one who saw,
Observed, nor shunned the busy scenes of life,
But mingled not, and mid the din, the stir,
Lived as a separate spirit.

Much had passed
Since last we parted; and those five short years, —
Much had they told! His clustering locks were turned
Gray; nor did aught recall the youth that swam
From Sestos to Abydos. Yet his voice,
Still it was sweet; still from his eye the thought
Flashed lightning-like, nor lingered on the way,
Waiting for words. Far, far into the night
We sat, conversing, — no unwelcome hour
The hour we met; and, when Aurora rose,
Rising, we climbed the rugged Apennine.

Samuel Rogers.

Brescia.

THE PATRIOT.

IT was roses, roses, all the way,
With myrtle mixed in my path like mad.
The house-roofs seemed to heave and sway,
The church-spires flamed, such flags they had,
A year ago on this very day!

The air broke into a mist with bells,
The old walls rocked with the crowds and cries.
Had I said, "Good folks, mere noise repels,
But give me your sun from yonder skies!"
They had answered, "And afterward, what else?"

Alack, it was I who leaped at the sun,
To give it my loving friends to keep.
Naught man could do have I left undone,
And you see my harvest, what I reap
This very day, now a year is run.

There 's nobody on the house-tops now, —
Just a palsied few at the windows set, —
For the best of the sight is, all allow,
At the Shambles' Gate, — or, better yet,
By the very scaffold's foot, I trow.

I go in the rain, and, more than needs,
A rope cuts both my wrists behind,
And I think, by the feel, my forehead bleeds,
For they fling, whoever has a mind,
Stones at me for my year's misdeeds.

Thus I entered Brescia, and thus I go!
In such triumphs people have dropped down dead.
"Thou, paid by the world, — what dost thou owe
Me?" God might have questioned; but now instead
'T is God shall requite! I am safer so.

Robert Browning.

Brindisi (*Brundusium*).

BRUNDUSIUM.

UNEQUAL thus to Cæsar, Pompey yields
The fair dominion of Hesperia's fields:
Swift through Apulia march his flying powers,
And seek the safety of Brundusium's towers.
This city a Dictæan people hold,
Here placed by tall Athenian barks of old;
When with false omens from the Cretan shore,
Their sable sails victorious Theseus bore.
Here Italy a narrow length extends,
And in a scanty slip projected ends.
A crooked mole around the waves she winds,
And in her folds the Adriatic binds.
Nor yet the bending shores could form a bay,
Did not a barrier isle the winds delay,
And break the seas tempestuous in their way.
Huge mounds of rocks are placed by nature's hand,
To guard around the hospitable strand;
To turn the storm, repulse the rushing tide,
And bid the anchoring bark securely ride.
Hence Nereus wide the liquid main displays,
And spreads to various ports his watery ways;
Whether the pilot from Corcyra stand,
Or for Illyrian Epidamnus' strand.
Hither when all the Adriatic roars,
And thundering billows vex the double shores;

When sable clouds around the welkin spread,
And frowning storms involve Ceraunia's head;
When white with froth Calabrian Sason lies,
Hither the tempest-beaten vessel flies.

Lucan. Tr. Nicholas Rowe.

Busento, the River.

THE GRAVE IN THE BUSENTO.

BY Cosenza, songs of wail at midnight wake Busento's shore,
O'er the wave resounds the answer, and amid the vortex' roar!

Valiant Goths, like spectres, steal along the banks with hurried pace,
Weeping over Alaric dead, the best, the bravest of his race.

Ah! too soon, from home so far, was it their lot to dig his grave,
While still o'er his shoulders flowed his youthful ringlets' flaxen wave.

On the shore of the Busento ranged, they with each other vied,
As they dug another bed to turn the torrent's course aside.

In the waveless hollow turning o'er and o'er the sod, the corse
Deep into the earth they sank, in armor clad, upon his horse.

Covered then with earth again the horse and rider in the grave,
That above the hero's tomb the torrent's lofty plants might wave.

And, a second time diverted, was the flood conducted back,
Foaming rushed Busento's billows onwards in their wonted track.

And a warrior chorus sang, "Sleep with thy honors, hero brave!
"Ne'er shall foot of lucre-lusting Roman desecrate thy grave!"

Far and wide the songs of praise resounded in the Gothic host;
Bear them on, Busento's billow, bear them on from coast to coast!

August von Platen. Tr. Alfred Baskerville.

ALARIC.

IS then that daring spirit fled?
Doth Alaric slumber with the dead?
Tamed are the warrior's pride and strength,
And he and earth are calm at length.

The land where heaven unclouded shines,
Where sleep the sunbeams on the vines;
The land by conquest made his own,
Can yield him now — a grave alone.
But his — her lord from Alp to sea —
No common sepulchre shall be!
O, make his tomb where mortal eye
Its buried wealth may ne'er descry!
Where mortal foot may never tread
Above a victor monarch's bed.
Let not his royal dust be hid
'Neath star-aspiring pyramid;
Nor bid the gathered mound arise,
To bear his memory to the skies.
Years roll away, — oblivion claims
Her triumph o'er heroic names;
And hands profane disturb the clay
That once was fired with glory's ray;
And avarice, from their secret gloom,
Drags e'en the treasures of the tomb.
But thou, O leader of the free!
That general doom awaits not thee:
Thou, where no step may e'er intrude,
Shalt rest in regal solitude,
Till, bursting on thy sleep profound,
The Awakener's final trumpet sound.
Turn ye the waters from their course,
Bid nature yield to human force,
And hollow in the torrent's bed
A chamber for the mighty dead.
The work is done, — the captive's hand

Hath well obeyed his lord's command.
Within that royal tomb are cast
The richest trophies of the past,
The wealth of many a stately dome,
The gold and gems of plundered Rome;
And when the midnight stars are beaming,
And ocean waves in stillness gleaming,
Stern in their grief, his warriors bear
The Chastener of the Nations there,
To rest at length from victory's toil,
Alone, with all an empire's spoil!

Then the freed current's rushing wave
Rolls o'er the secret of the grave;
Then streams the martyred captives' blood
To crimson that sepulchral flood,
Whose conscious tide alone shall keep
The mystery in its bosom deep.
Time hath passed on since then, and swept
From earth the urns where heroes slept;
Temples of gods and domes of kings
Are mouldering with forgotten things;
Yet not shall ages e'er molest
The viewless home of Alaric's rest:
Still rolls, like them, the unfailing river,
The guardian of his dust forever.

Felicia Hemans.

Cadenabbia.

CADENABBIA.

LAKE OF COMO.

NO sound of wheels or hoof-beat breaks
The silence of the summer day,
As by the loveliest of all lakes
I while the idle hours away.

I pace the leafy colonnade
Where level branches of the plane
Above me weave a roof of shade
Impervious to the sun and rain.

At times a sudden rush of air
Flutters the lazy leaves o'erhead,
And gleams of sunshine toss and flare
Like torches down the path I tread.

By Somariva's garden gate
I make the marble stairs my seat,
And hear the water, as I wait,
Lapping the steps beneath my feet.

The undulation sinks and swells
Along the stony parapets,
And far away the floating bells
Tinkle upon the fisher's nets.

Silent and slow, by tower and town
  The freighted barges come and go,
Their pendent shadows gliding down
  By town and tower submerged below.

The hills sweep upward from the shore
  With villas scattered one by one
Upon their wooded spurs, and lower
  Bellaggio blazing in the sun.

And dimly seen, a tangled mass
  Of walls and woods, of light and shade,
Stands beckoning up the Stelvio Pass
  Varenna with its white cascade.

I ask myself, Is this a dream?
  Will it all vanish into air?
Is there a land of such supreme
  And perfect beauty anywhere?

Sweet vision! Do not fade away;
  Linger until my heart shall take
Into itself the summer day,
  And all the beauty of the lake.

Linger until upon my brain
  Is stamped an image of the scene,
Then fade into the air again,
  And be as if thou hadst not been.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

Cannæ.

CANNÆ.

SAVE where Garganus, with low-ridgéd bound,
Protects the north, the eye outstretching far
Surveys one sea of gently swelling ground,
A fitly moulded "Orchestra of War."

Here Aufidus, between his humble banks
With wild thyme plotted, winds along the plain,
A devious path, as when the serried ranks
Passed over it, that passed not back again.

The long-horned herds enjoy the cool delight,
Sleeping half-merged, to shun the deep sun-glow,
Which, that May-morning, dazed the Roman sight,
But fell innocuous on the subtler foe.

We feel the wind upon our bosoms beat,
That whilom dimmed with dust those noble eyes,
And rendered aimless many a gallant feat,
And brought disgrace on many a high emprise.

And close beside us rests the ancient well,
Where at the end of that accursed day,
Apulian peasants to their grandsons tell,
The friend and follower of wise Fabius lay;

Here fainting lay, compelled by fate to share
Shame not his own, — here spurned the scanty time

Still left for flight, lest, living he might bear
Hard witness to his colleague's generous crime.

I have seen many fields where men have fought
With mightier issues, but not one, I deem,
Where history offers to reflecting thought
So sharp a check of greatness so supreme.

Lord Houghton.

Capri, the Island.

CAPRI.

WHAT the mountainous Isle
Seen in the South? 'T is where a monster dwelt,
Hurling his victims from the topmost cliff;
Then and then only merciful, so slow,
So subtle, were the tortures they endured.
Fearing and feared he lived, cursing and cursed;
And still the dungeons in the rock breathe out
Darkness, distemper. Strange, that one so vile
Should from his den strike terror through the world;
Should, where withdrawn in his decrepitude,
Say to the noblest, be they where they might,
"Go from the earth!" and from the earth they went:
Yet such things were, and will be, when mankind,
Losing all virtue, lose all energy;
And for the loss incur the penalty,
Trodden down and trampled.

Samuel Rogers.

CAPRI.

THERE is an isle, kissed by a smiling sea,
Where all sweet confluents meet: a thing of heaven,
A spent aërolite, that well may be
The missing sister of the starry Seven.
Celestial beauty nestles at its knee,
And in its lap is naught of earthly leaven.
'T is girt and crowned with loveliness; its year,
Eternal summer; winter comes not near.

'T is small, as things of beauty ofttimes are,
And in a morning round it you may row,
Nor need a tedious haste your bark debar
From gliding inwards where the ripples flow
Into strange grots whose roofs are azure spar,
Whose pavements liquid silver. Mild winds blow
Around your prow, and at your keel the foam,
Leaping and laughing, freshly wafts you home.

They call the island Capri, — with a name
Dulling an airy dream, just as the soul
Is clogged with body palpable, — and Fame
Hath long while winged the word from pole to pole.
Its human story is a tale of shame,
Of all unnatural lusts a gory scroll,
Record of what, when pomp and power agree,
Man once hath been, and man again may be.

Terrace and slope from shore to summit show
Of all rich climes the glad-surrendered spoil.

Here the bright olive's phantom branches glow,
There the plump fig sucks sweetness from the soil.
Mid odorous flowers that through the Zodiac blow,
Returning tenfold to man's leisured toil,
Hesperia's fruit hangs golden. High in air,
The vine runs riot, spurning human care.

And flowers of every hue and breath abound,
Charming the sense; the burning cactus glows,
Like daisies elsewhere dappling all the ground,
And in each cleft the berried myrtle blows.
The playful lizard glides and darts around,
The elfin fireflies flicker o'er the rows
Of ripened grain. Alien to pain and wrong,
Men fill the days with dance, the nights with song.

Alfred Austin.

THE AZURE GROTTO.

I.

BENEATH the vine-clad slopes of Capri's Isle,
Which run down to the margin of that sea
Whose waters kiss the sweet Parthenope,
There is a grot whose rugged front the while
Frowns only dark where all is seen to smile.
But enter, and behold! surpassing fair
The magic sight that meets your vision there, —
Not heaven! with all its broad expanse of blue,
Gleams colored with a sheen so rich, so rare,
So changing in its clear, translucent hue;
Glassed in the lustrous wave, the walls and roof

Shine as does silver scattered o'er the woof
Of some rich robe, or bright as stars whose light
Inlays the azure concave of the night.

II.

You cannot find throughout this world, I ween,
Waters so fair as those within this cave,
Color like that which flashes from the wave,
Or which is steeped in such cerulean sheen
As here gleams forth within this grotto's screen.
And when the oar the boatman gently takes
And dips it in the flood, a fiery glow,
Ruddy as phosphor, stirs in depths below;
Each ripple into burning splendor breaks,
As though some hidden fires beneath did lie
Waiting a touch to kindle into flame,
And shine in radiance on the dazzled eye,
As sparkling up from wells of light they came,
To make this grot a glory far and nigh.

Charles D. Bell.

THE GROTTA AZZURRA.

MANY an archéd roof is bent
Over the wave,
But none like thine, from the firmament
To the shells that at thy threshold lave.
What name shall shadow thy rich-blue sheen,
Violet, sapphire, or ultramarine,
Beautiful cave?

Blue, — all blue, — may we not compare it
With heaven's hue,
With the pearl-shell, with burning spirit,
Or with aught that is azure too?
No! for in ghostly realms alone
Is the like of thy lustre shone,
Cave of blue!

Less of earth than the spirit-world,
Morning ne'er
Waters of thine with its dews impearled,
Nor sunrise crimsoned the concave here;
But evening in thee hath, as grandly glooms
The twilight which thy one star illumes,
A rival sphere.

And that star — the great eye of heaven
Watching thee —
Waxes and wanes with morn and even,
Beams as the skies beyond may be;
Resting on thy horizon's rim
Steadfast, but burning bright and dim
Changefully.

On thy huge dome and cathedral aisles,
Loftier far
Than man's monuments, Capri piles
Island rocks, which mountains are.
Gleams through the flood thy spangled floor,
As light streams in by thine open door
On rock and spar.

The world without by that sole portal
May enter in;
And therefore sacred to shapes immortal
For classic ages thy halls have been.
Sailing along from the lessening skylight,
Let us from the deepening twilight
Its secrets win.

Mermaids, mantled in mazarine,
Fancy sees;
The ocean-sirens, and her, their queen,
Of music-charméd memories.
Still breathes the ancient Parthenope,
O'er waters of modern Napoli
Her melodies.

Blue, — blue, — beautiful and intense, —
Everywhere:
Spirits, or some one spirit immense,
Breathing and burning in the air;
Making an ardent presence felt,
Till the rocks seem as like to melt
In the glare!

No! they may emit no heat,
Those prisoned beams.
At noontide, in thy coolness sweet,
The glowing Italian summer dreams,
And the limpid and sparkling lymph
Bath of beauty, in form of nymph,
Well beseems.

World of wonders and strange delights,
Submontane sea,
Bowers of branching stalactites,
Islands of lapis lazuli,
And waves so clear, and air so rich,
That, gazing, we know not which is which, —
Adieu to thee!

To bathe the burning brow is sweet
In such baptism,
Often to find out truth's retreat,
In sparkling grotto, in cool abysm;
So shall deep quiet thy soul imbue,
And melt into one harmonious hue
The garish prism!

William Gibson.

Capua.

CAPUA.

CAPUA was supposed to take its name from being the caput, or head city, of the southern Etruscan confederacy.

FIRST of old of Oscan towns!
Prize of triumphs, pearl of crowns;
Half a thousand years have fled,
Since arose thy royal head,
Splendor of the Lucumoes.

Tuscan fortress, doomed to feel
Sharpest edge of Samnite steel,
Flashing down the Liris tide;
Re-arisen, in richer pride,
Cynosure of Italy!

Let the Gaurian echoes say
How, with Rome, we ruled the fray;
Till the fatal field was won
By the chief who slew his son,
'Neath the vines of Vesulus.

Siren city, where the plain
Glitters twice with golden grain,
Twice the bowers of roses blow,
Twice the grapes and olives flow,
Thou wilt chain the conqueror;

Home of war-subduing eyes,
Shining under softest skies,
Gleaming to the silver sea,
Liber, Venus, strive for thee,
Empress of Ausonia!

Glorious in thy martial bloom,
Glorious still in storm and gloom,
We thy chiefs who dare to die
Raise again thy battle-cry,—
Charge with Capuan chivalry!

John Nichol.

Catania.

CATANIA.

THOU buried city, o'er thy site I muse! —
What! does no monumental stone remain
To say, "Here yawned the earthquake-riven plain,
Here stood Catania, and here Syracuse"?
Along thy sad and solitary sand
I seek thee in thyself, yet find instead
Naught but the dreadful stillness of the dead.
Startled and horror-struck, I wondering stand,
And cry: O, terrible, tremendous course
Of God's decrees! I see it, and I feel it here:
Shall I not comprehend and dread its force?
Rise, ye lost cities! let your ruins rear
Their massy forms on high, portentous corse,
That trembling ages may behold and fear!

Vincenzo da Filicaja. Tr. Anon.

LINES

WRITTEN AFTER VISITING THE MONASTERIES AT CATANIA.

MONKS and holy clerks profest
Lead the sweetest and the best,
The securest life of all.
Look within the convent wall,
See the countenances there
Unannoyed by worldly care,

Unaffected happy faces,
With the features and the traces
Of habitual tranquillity;
With the joyous affability
That bespeaks a heart and head,
Undisturbed at board and bed,
Studious hours and holy rites,
Occupy their days and nights;
Study, learning, and devotion,
Leading onward to promotion;
Here discreet and trusty Friars
Rule the Brotherhood as Priors;
Some are known as casuists,
Theologians, canonists;
One among them, here and there,
Rises to the Prelate's chair.
Thence again his parts and knowledge,
Fix him in the sacred college,
With the robe of Cardinal;
Last, — the topmost point of all, —
The majestic throne of Pope
Stands within the verge of hope;
That supreme and awful state
Which the noble and the great
With devout obeisance greet,
Humbly falling at his feet.

John Hookham Frere.

Clitumnus.

CLITUMNUS.

BUT thou, Clitumnus! in thy sweetest wave
Of the most living crystal that was e'er
The haunt of river nymph, to gaze and lave
Her limbs where nothing hid them, thou dost rear
Thy grassy banks whereon the milk-white steer
Grazes; the purest god of gentle waters!
And most serene of aspect, and most clear;
Surely that stream was unprofaned by slaughters, —
A mirror and a bath for Beauty's youngest daughters!

And on thy happy shore a temple still,
Of small and delicate proportion, keeps,
Upon a mild declivity of hill,
Its memory of thee; beneath it sweeps
Thy current's calmness; oft from out it leaps
The finny darter with the glittering scales,
Who dwells and revels in thy glassy deeps;
While, chance, some scattered water-lily sails
Down where the shallower wave still tells its bubbling tales.

Lord Byron.

Cogoletto.

BOYHOOD OF COLUMBUS.

I KNOW not when this hope enthralled me first,
But from my boyhood up I loved to hear
The tall pine-forests of the Apennine
Murmur their hoary legends of the sea,
Which hearing, I in vision clear beheld
The sudden dark of tropic night shut down
O'er the huge whisper of great watery wastes,
The while a pair of herons trailingly
Flapped inland, where some league-wide river hurled
The yellow spoil of unconjectured realms
Far through a gulf's green silence, never scarred
By any but the North-wind's hurrying keels.
And not the pines alone; all sights and sounds
To my world-seeking heart paid fealty,
And catered for it as the Cretan bees
Brought honey to the baby Jupiter,
Who in his soft hand crushed a violet,
Godlike foremusing the rough thunder's gripe;
Then did I entertain the poet's song,
My great Idea's guest, and, passing o'er
That iron bridge the Tuscan built to hell,
I heard Ulysses tell of mountain-chains
Whose adamantine links, his manacles,
The western main shook growling, and still gnawed;
I brooded on the wise Athenian's tale

Of happy Atlantis, and heard Björne's keel
Crunch the gray pebbles of the Vinland shore:
For I believed the poets; it is they
Who utter wisdom from the central deep,
And, listening to the inner flow of things,
Speak to the age out of eternity.

James Russell Lowell.

Como, the Lake.

LAKE OF COMO.

MORE pleased, my foot the hidden margin roves
Of Como, bosomed deep in chestnut groves.
No meadows thrown between, the giddy steeps
Tower, bare or sylvan, from the narrow deeps.
To towns, whose shades of no rude noise complain,
From ringing team apart and grating wain, —
To flat-roofed towns, that touch the water's bound,
Or lurk in woody sunless glens profound,
Or, from the bending rocks, obtrusive cling,
And o'er the whitened wave their shadows fling, —
The pathway leads, as round the steeps it twines;
And silence loves its purple roof of vines.
The loitering traveller hence, at evening, sees
From rock-hewn steps the sail between the trees;
Or marks, mid opening cliffs, fair dark-eyed maids
Tend the small harvest of their garden glades;
Or stops the solemn mountain-shades to view

Stretch o'er the pictured mirror broad and blue,
And track the yellow lights from steep to steep,
As up the opposing hills they slowly creep.
Aloft, here, half a village shines, arrayed
In golden light; half hides itself in shade:
While, from amid the darkened roofs, the spire,
Restlessly flashing, seems to mount like fire:
There, all unshaded, blazing forests throw
Rich golden verdure on the lake below.
Slow glides the sail along the illumined shore,
And steals into the shade the lazy oar;
Soft bosoms breathe around contagious sighs,
And amorous music on the water dies.

How blest, delicious scene! the eye that greets
Thy open beauties or thy lone retreats, —
Beholds the unwearied sweep of wood that scales
Thy cliffs; the endless waters of thy vales;
Thy lowly cots that sprinkle all the shore,
Each with its household boat beside the door;
Thy torrent shooting from the clear-blue sky;
Thy towns, that cleave, like swallows' nests, on high;
That glimmer hoar in eve's last light, descried
Dim from the twilight water's shaggy side,
Whence lutes and voices down the enchanted woods
Steal, and compose the oar-forgotten floods;
Thy lake, that, streaked or dappled, blue or gray,
Mid smoking woods gleams hid from morning's ray
Slow-travelling down the western hills, to enfold
Its green-tinged margin in a blaze of gold;
Thy glittering steeples, whence the matin bell

Calls forth the woodman from his desert cell,
And quickens the blithe sound of oars that pass
Along the steaming lake, to early mass.
But now farewell to each and all, — adieu
To every charm, and last and chief to you,
Ye lovely maidens that in noontide shade
Rest near your little plots of wheaten glade;
To all that binds the soul in powerless trance,
Lip-dewing song, and ringlet-tossing dance;
Where sparling eyes and breaking smiles illume
The sylvan cabin's lute-enlivened gloom.
Alas! the very murmur of the streams
Breathes o'er the failing soul voluptuous dreams,
While slavery, forcing the sunk mind to dwell
On joys that might disgrace the captive's cell,
Her shameless timbrel shakes on Como's marge,
And lures from bay to bay the vocal barge.

William Wordsworth.

LAKE OF COMO.

AND, Como! thou, a treasure whom the earth
Keeps to herself, confined as in a depth
Of Abyssinian privacy. I spake
Of thee, thy chestnut woods, and garden plots
Of Indian-corn tended by dark-eyed maids;
Thy lofty steeps, and pathways roofed with vines,
Winding from house to house, from town to town,
Sole link that binds them to each other; walks,
League after league, and cloistral avenues,
Where silence dwells if music be not there:

While yet a youth undisciplined in verse,
Through fond ambition of that hour, I strove
To chant your praise; nor can approach you now
Ungreeted by a more melodious song,
Where tones of nature smoothed by learned art
May flow in lasting current. Like a breeze
Or sunbeam over your domain I passed
In motion without pause; but ye have left
Your beauty with me, a serene accord
Of forms and colors, passive, yet endowed
In their submissiveness with power as sweet
And gracious, almost might I dare to say,
As virtue is, or goodness; sweet as love,
Or the remembrance of a generous deed,
Or mildest visitation of pure thought,
When God, the giver of all joy, is thanked
Religiously, in silent blessedness;
Sweet as this last herself, for such it is.

William Wordsworth.

LAKE OF COMO.

I LOVE to sail along the Larian Lake
Under the shore, though not, where'er he dwelt,
To visit Pliny; not, in loose attire,
When from the bath or from the tennis-court,
To catch him musing in his plane-tree walk,
Or angling from his window: and, in truth,
Could I recall the ages past and play
The fool with Time, I should perhaps reserve
My leisure for Catullus on his lake,

Though to fare worse, or Virgil at his farm
A little further on the way to Mantua.
But such things cannot be. So I sit still,
And let the boatman shift his little sail,
His sail so forked and so swallow-like,
Well pleased with all that comes. The morning air
Plays on my cheek how gently, flinging round
A silvery gleam: and now the purple mists
Rise like a curtain; now the sun looks out,
Filling, o'erflowing with his glorious light
This noble amphitheatre of hills;
And now appear as on a phosphor sea
Numberless barks, from Milan, from Pavìa;
Some sailing up, some down, and some at rest,
Lading, unlading at that small port-town
Under the promontory, — its tall tower
And long flat roofs, just such as Gaspar drew,
Caught by a sunbeam slanting through a cloud;
A quay-like scene, glittering and full of life,
And doubled by reflection.
What delight,
After so long a sojourn in the wild,
To hear once more the peasant at his work!
But in a clime like this where is he not?
Along the shores, among the hills 't is now
The heyday of the vintage; all abroad,
But most the young and of the gentler sex,
Busy in gathering; all among the vines,
Some on the ladder and some underneath,
Filling their baskets of green wicker-work,
While many a canzonet and frolic laugh

Come through the leaves; the vines in light festoons
From tree to tree, the trees in avenues,
And every avenue a covered walk
Hung with black clusters. 'T is enough to make
The sad man merry, the benevolent one
Melt into tears, — so general is the joy!
While up and down the cliffs, over the lake,
Wains oxen-drawn and panniered mules are seen,
Laden with grapes and dropping rosy wine.

Samuel Rogers.

Cuma (Cumæ).

CUMÆ.

WEEPING he spoke, then gave his fleet the reins,
Until at length Eubœan Cumæ's shores
They reach. Seaward the prows are turned; the ships
Fast anchored, and the curved sterns fringe the beach.
On the Hesperian shore the warriors leap
With eager haste. Some seek the seminal flame
Hid in the veins of flint; some rob the woods,
The dense abode of beasts, and rivulets
Discover. But the good Æneas seeks
The heights o'er which the great Apollo rules,
And the dread cavern where the Sibyl dwells,
Revered afar, whose soul the Delian god
Inspires with thought and passion, and to her
Reveals the future. And now Dian's groves
They enter, and the temple roofed with gold.

The story goes, that Dædalus, who fled
From Minos, dared to trust himself with wings
Upon the air, and sailed in untried flight
Toward the frigid Arctic, till at length
He hovered over the Cumæan towers.
Here first restored to earth, he gave to thee,
Phœbus, his oar-like wings, a sacred gift,
And built a spacious temple to thy name.

Virgil. Tr. C. P. Cranch.

THE SIBYL'S CAVE AT CUMA.

CUMEAN Sibyl! from thy sultry cave
Thy dark eyes level with the sulphurous ground
Through the gloom flashing, roll in wrath around.
What see they? Coasts perpetual earthquakes pave
With ruin; piles half buried in the wave;
Wrecks of old times and new in lava drowned;—
And festive crowds, sin-steeped and myrtle-crowned,
Like idiots dancing on a parent's grave.
And they foresee. Those pallid lips with pain
Suppress their thrilling whispers. Sibyl, spare!
Could Wisdom's voice divide yon sea, or rear
A new Vesuvius from its flaming plane,
Futile the warning! Power despised! forbear
To deepen guilt by counsel breathed in vain!

Aubrey de Vere.

SIBYLLA CUMANA.

MOON-CURVES of shore, and promontories and isles;
A many-purpled sea flowing in and round;
Wrecks of antiquity and yet elder myth;
A rubbish, half on land and half in sea,
Of Rome's once sumptuous seaside luxury;
Phlegræan fields, where Titan force still heaves
The uncertain bases of the vernal hills;
Volcanic bowls, smouldering and boiling yet,
Or brimmed with cool oblivion of the wave;
A ghastly tunnel in the sunny cliff
Of one fair lake that bears Avernus' name;
A narrow chamber of Cimmerian gloom
And Phlegethonic steam (the Sibyl's grot);
A green hill, crowned with venerable walls
Of an Acropolis, and a lonely shaft
Of fluted Doric, where Apollo's fane
(The Sibyl's lover erst and tutelar god)
Was reared by Dædalus, hither voyaging
With wings, as fabled, or invented sails;
And the hill honey-combed with labyrinths
Of caverns, opening on the sunset sea
(The hundred mouths of Sibylline oracles);
The Acherusian lake; the Elysian fields,
Clothed in the delicate atmosphere of spring,
Sprouting with young vines, redolent of the fruit
And flower of orange, true Hesperian gold,
And the wide whisper of the violet;
A round and vaulted ruin, temple or bath

In times imperial, where two women danced
The tarantella to a tambourine,
That echo made orchestral, — one a girl,
Like a Bacchante in abandonment
To her own grace, with pure Hellenic face,
And plash of blue-black hair, and flashing eyes;
And one a weird sexagenarian crone, —
Types of the Sibyl in her youth and age; —
These reminiscences of a long day
By Baiæ's and more ancient Cumæ's shore
Set me to dreaming of the mystic maid
That sold the books to Tarquin. Me she led
To no ancestral and prophetic shades,
But through the gates of Sleep, ivory or horn,
She brought me, with the scent of roses dead,
One Sibylline leaf, — a poem of her youth,
Set to love-music by the Lyric god.

William Gibson.

Etna (Ætna), the Mountain.

ETNA.

BUT whomsoever Jove
Hath looked on without love,
Are anguished when they hear the voiceful sound;
Whether on land they be,
Or in the raging sea;
With him, outstretched on dread Tartarian bound,

Hundred-headed Typhon; erst
In famed Cilicia's cavern nurst;
Foe of the gods; whose shaggy breast,
By Cuma's sea-beat mound, is prest;
Pent by plains of Sicily,
And that snowed pillar heavenly high,
Ætna, nurse of ceaseless frost;
From whose caverned depths aspire,
In purest folds upwreathing, tost,
Fountains of approachless fire.
By day, a flood of smouldering smoke,
With sullen gleam the torrents pour;
But in darkness, many a rock,
Crimson flame, along the shore,
Hurls to the deep with deafening roar.
From that worm aloft are thrown
The wells of Vulcan, full of fear;
A marvel strange to look upon,
And, for the passing mariner,
As marvellous to hear;
How Ætna's tops with umbrage black,
And soil do hold him bound,
And by that pallet all his back
Is scored with many a wound.

Pindar. Tr. Henry Francis Cary.

ETNA.

THE port is large,
And sheltered from the winds. But Ætna near,
With frightful desolation roars, at times

Sending up bursts of black clouds in the air,
With rolling smoke of pitch, and flashing sparks,
And globes of flame that lick the very stars.
Then, from the bowels of the mountain torn,
Huge stones are hurled, and melted rocks heaped up,
A roaring flood of fire. 'T is said that here
Enceladus, half blasted by the bolts
Of heaven, was thrust beneath the mountainous mass;
And mighty Ætna, piled above, sends forth
His fiery breathings from the broken flues;
And every time he turns his weary sides,
All Sicily groans and trembles, and the sky
Is wreathed in smoke.

Virgil. Tr. C. P. Cranch.

ETNA.

NEAR Sicily and Æolian Lipari
An island rises steep, with smoking rocks.
Beneath, by huge Cyclopean forges scooped
And eaten out, the vast Ætnean caves
Thunder, and mighty anvil-strokes are heard;
And all the caverns roar and hiss, with blasts
Of fiery steel, from panting furnaces.
The abode of Vulcan this, lending its name
To the surrounding soil. Here from on high
The fire-god lights. Below, the Cyclops toil
Over their forges: Brontes, Steropes,
And naked-limbed Pyracmon.

Virgil. Tr. C. P. Cranch.

MOUNT ETNA.

HOW gracious is the mountain at this hour!
A thousand times have I been here alone
Or with the revellers from the mountain towns,
But never on so fair a morn; — the sun
Is shining on the brilliant mountain-crests,
And on the highest pines; but further down
Here in the valley is in shade; the sward
Is dark, and on the stream the mist still hangs;
One sees one's footprints crushed in the wet grass,
One's breath curls in the air; and on these pines
That climb from the stream's edge, the long gray tufts,
Which the goats love, are jewelled thick with dew.

* * *

The noon is hot; when we have crossed the stream
We shall have left the woody tract, and come
Upon the open shoulder of the hill.
See how the giant spires of yellow bloom
Of the sun-loving gentian, in the heat,
Are shining on those naked slopes like flame!
Let us rest here.

* * *

The track winds down to the clear stream
To cross the sparkling shallows; there
The cattle love to gather, on their way
To the high mountain pastures, and to stay
Till the rough cow-herds drive them past,
Knee-deep in the cool ford; for 't is the last

Of all the woody, high, well-watered dells
On Etna; and the beam
Of noon is broken there by chestnut boughs
Down its steep verdant sides; the air
Is freshened by the leaping stream, which throws
Eternal showers of spray on the mossed roots
Of trees, and veins of turf, and long dark shoots
Of ivy-plants, and fragrant hanging bells
Of hyacinths, and on late anemones,
That muffle its wet banks; but glade
And stream and sward and chestnut-trees
End here; Etna beyond, in the broad glare
Of the hot noon, without a shade,
Slope behind slope, up to the peak, lies bare;
The peak round which the white clouds play.

Matthew Arnold.

ENCELADUS.

UNDER Mount Etna he lies,
It is slumber, it is not death;
For he struggles at times to arise,
And above him the lurid skies
Are hot with his fiery breath.

The crags are piled on his breast,
The earth is heaped on his head;
But the groans of his wild unrest,
Though smothered and half suppressed,
Are heard, and he is not dead.

And the nations far away
  Are watching with eager eyes;
They talk together and say,
"To-morrow, perhaps to-day,
  Enceladus will arise!"

And the old gods, the austere
  Oppressors in their strength,
Stand aghast and white with fear
At the ominous sounds they hear,
  And tremble, and mutter, "At length!"

Ah me! for the land that is sown
  With the harvest of despair!
Where the burning cinders, blown
From the lips of the overthrown
  Enceladus, fill the air.

Where ashes are heaped in drifts
  Over vineyard and field and town,
Whenever he starts and lifts
His head through the blackened rifts
  Of the crags that keep him down.

See, see! the red light shines!
  'T is the glare of his awful eyes!
And the storm-wind shouts through the pines
Of Alps and of Apennines,
  "Enceladus, arise!"

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

Euganean Hills.

THE EUGANEAN HILLS.

MID the mountains Euganean,
I stood listening to the pæan
With which the legioned rooks did hail
The sun's uprise majestical;
Gathering round with wings all hoar,
Through the dewy mist they soar
Like gray shades, till the eastern heaven
Bursts, and then, as clouds of even,
Flecked with fire and azure, lie
In the unfathomable sky,
So their plumes of purple grain,
Starred with drops of golden rain,
Gleam above the sunlight woods,
As in silent multitudes
On the morning's fitful gale
Through the broken mist they sail;
And the vapors cloven and gleaming
Follow down the dark steep streaming,
Till all is bright and clear and still
Round the solitary hill.

Beneath is spread like a green sea
The waveless plain of Lombardy,
Bounded by the vaporous air,
Islanded by cities fair.

Underneath day's azure eyes,
Ocean's nursling, Venice lies, —
A peopled labyrinth of walls,
Amphitrite's destined halls,
Which her hoary sire now paves
With his blue and beaming waves.
Lo! the sun upsprings behind,
Broad, red, radiant, half reclined
On the level quivering line
Of the waters crystalline;
And before that chasm of light,
As within a furnace bright,
Column, tower, and dome, and spire,
Shine like obelisks of fire,
Pointing with inconstant motion
From the altar of dark ocean
To the sapphire-tinted skies;
As the flames of sacrifice
From the marble shrines did rise
As to pierce the dome of gold
Where Apollo spoke of old.

* * *

Lo, the sun floats up the sky,
Like thought-wingéd Liberty,
Till the universal light
Seems to level plain and height;
From the sea a mist has spread,
And the beams of morn lie dead
On the towers of Venice now,
Like its glory long ago.

* * *

Noon descends around me now:
'T is the noon of autumn's glow,
When a soft and purple mist
Like a vaporous amethyst,
Or an air-dissolvéd star
Mingling light and fragrance, far
From the curved horizon's bound,
To the point of heaven's profound,
Fills the overflowing sky;
And the plains that silent lie
Underneath. The leaves unsodden
Where the infant frost has trodden
With his morning-wingéd feet,
Whose bright print is gleaming yet;
And the red and golden vines,
Piercing with their trellised lines
The rough, dark-skirted wilderness;
The dun and bladed grass no less,
Pointing from this hoary tower
In the windless air; the flower
Glimmering at my feet; the line
Of the olive-sandalled Apennine
In the south dimly islanded;
And the Alps, whose snows are spread
High between the clouds and sun;
And of living things each one;
And my spirit, which so long
Darkened this swift stream of song,
Interpenetrated lie
By the glory of the sky;
Be it love, light, harmony,

Odor, or the soul of all
Which from heaven like dew doth fall,
Or the mind which feeds this verse
Peopling the lone universe.
Noon descends, and after noon
Autumn's evening meets me soon,
Leading the infantine moon,
And that one star, which to her
Almost seems to minister
Half the crimson light she brings
From the sunset's radiant springs:
And the soft dreams of the morn
(Which like winged winds had borne
To that silent isle, which lies
Mid remembered agonies,
The frail bark of this lone being,)
Pass, to other sufferers fleeing,
And its ancient pilot, Pain,
Sits beside the helm again.

* * *

Percy Bysshe Shelley.

Fano.

THE GUARDIAN-ANGEL.

DEAR and great angel, wouldst thou only leave
That child, when thou hast done with him, for me!
Let me sit all the day here, that when eve

Shall find performed thy special ministry
And time come for departure, thou, suspending
Thy flight, mayst see another child for tending,
Another still, to quiet and retrieve.

Then I shall feel thee step one step, no more,
From where thou standest now, to where I gaze,
And suddenly my head be covered o'er
With those wings, white above the child who prays
Now on that tomb, — and I shall feel thee guarding
Me, out of all the world; for me discarding
Yon heaven thy home, that waits and opes its door!

I would not look up thither past thy head
Because the door opes, like that child, I know,
For I should have thy gracious face instead,
Thou bird of God! and wilt thou bend me low
Like him, and lay, like his, my hands together,
And lift them up to pray, and gently tether
Me, as thy lamb there, with thy garment's spread?

If this was ever granted, I would rest
My head beneath thine, while thy healing hands
Close-covered both my eyes beside thy breast,
Pressing the brain, which too much thought expands,
Back to its proper size again, and smoothing
Distortion down till every nerve had soothing,
And all lay quiet, happy, and supprest.

How soon all worldly wrong would be repaired!
I think how I should view the earth and skies

And sea, when once again my brow was bared
After thy healing, with such different eyes.
O world, as God has made it! all is beauty:
And knowing this, is love, and love is duty.
What further may be sought for or declared?

Guercino drew this angel I saw teach
(Alfred, dear friend) — that little child to pray,
Holding the little hands up, each to each
Pressed gently, — with his own head turned away
Over the earth where so much lay before him
Of work to do, though heaven was opening o'er him,
And he was left at Fano by the beach.

We were at Fano, and three times we went
To sit and see him in his chapel there,
And drink his beauty to our soul's content, —
My angel with me too; and since I care
For dear Guercino's fame (to which in power
And glory comes this picture for a dower,
Fraught with a pathos so magnificent),

And since he did not work so earnestly
At all times, and has else endured some wrong,
I took one thought his picture struck from me,
And spread it out, translating it to song.
My Love is here. Where are you, dear old friend?
How rolls the Wairoa at your world's far end?
This is Ancona, yonder is the sea.

Robert Browning.

Ferrara.

PRISON OF TASSO.

FERRARA! in thy wide and grass-grown streets,
Whose symmetry was not for solitude,
There seems as 't were a curse upon the seats
Of former sovereigns, and the antique brood
Of Este, which for many an age made good
Its strength within thy walls, and was of yore
Patron or tyrant, as the changing mood
Of petty power impelled, of those who wore
The wreath which Dante's brow alone had worn before.

And Tasso is their glory and their shame.
Hark to his strain! and then survey his cell!
And see how dearly earned Torquato's fame,
And where Alfonso bade his poet dwell.
The miserable despot could not quell
The insulted mind he sought to quench, and blend
With the surrounding maniacs, in the hell
Where he had plunged it. Glory without end
Scattered the clouds away, and on that name attend

The tears and praises of all time, while thine
Would rot in its oblivion, in the sink
Of worthless dust which from thy boasted line
Is shaken into nothing; but the link
Thou formest in his fortunes bids us think

Of thy poor malice, naming thee with scorn:
Alfonso, how thy ducal pageants shrink
From thee! if in another station born,
Scarce fit to be the slave of him thou mad'st to mourn:

Thou! formed to eat, and be despised, and die,
Even as the beasts that perish, save that thou
Hadst a more splendid trough and wider sty;
He! with a glory round his furrowed brow,
Which emanated then, and dazzles now,
In face of all his foes, the Cruscan quire,
And Boileau, whose rash envy could allow
No strain which shamed his country's creaking lyre,
That whetstone of the teeth, — monotony in wire!

Peace to Torquato's injured shade! 't was his
In life and death to be the mark where Wrong
Aimed with her poisoned arrows — but to miss.
O victor unsurpassed in modern song!
Each year brings forth its millions; but how long
The tide of generations shall roll on,
And not the whole combined and countless throng
Compose a mind like thine? Though all in one
Condensed their scattered rays, they would not form a sun.

Lord Byron.

TASSO'S DUNGEON.

HOW might the goaded sufferer in this cell,
With nothing upon which his eyes might fall,
Except this vacant court, that dreary wall, —

How might he live? I asked. Here doomed to dwell,
I marvel how at all he could repel
Thoughts which to madness and despair would call.
Enter this vault; the bare sight will appall
Thy spirit, even as mine within me fell,
Until I learned that wall not always there
Had stood, — 't was something that this iron grate
Had once looked out upon a garden fair.
There must have been then here, to calm his brain,
Green leaves, and flowers, and sunshine; — and a weight
Fell from me, and my heart revived again.

Richard Chenevix Trench.

TO THE DUKE ALPHONSO, ASKING TO BE LIBERATED.

A NEW Ixion upon fortune's wheel,
Whether I sink profound, or rise sublime,
One never-ceasing martyrdom I feel,
The same in woe, though changing all the time.
I wept above, where sunbeams sport and climb
The vines, and through their foliage sighs the breeze,
I burned and froze, languished, and prayed in rhyme.
Nor could your ire, nor my own grief appease.
Now in my prison, deep and dim, have grown
My torments greater still and keener far,
As if all sharpened on the dungeon-stone:
Magnanimous Alphonso! burst the bar,
Changing my fate, and not my cell alone,
And let my fortune wheel me where you are!

Torquato Tasso. Tr. Richard Henry Wilde.

TO THE PRINCESSES OF FERRARA.

FAIR daughters of Rénée! my song
Is not of pride and ire,
Fraternal discord, hate, and wrong,
Burning in life and death so strong,
From rule's accurst desire,
That even the flames divided long
Upon their funeral pyre.
But you I sing, of royal birth,
Nursed on one breast like them;
Two flowers, both lovely, blooming forth
From the same parent stem, —
Cherished by heaven, beloved by earth,
Of each a treasured gem!

To you I speak in whom we see
With wondrous concord blend
Sense, worth, fame, beauty, modesty,
Imploring you to lend
Compassion to the misery
And sufferings of your friend.
The memory of years gone by,
O, let me in your hearts renew, —
The scenes, the thoughts, o'er which I sigh,
The happy days I spent with you, —
And what, I ask, and where am I,
And what I was, and why secluded;
Whom did I trust, and who deluded?

Daughters of heroes and of kings,
Allow me to recall
These and a thousand other things, —
Sad, sweet, and mournful all!
From me few words, more tears, grief wrings, —
Tears burning as they fall.
For royal halls and festive bowers
Where, nobly serving, I
Shared and beguiled your private hours,
Studies, and sports I sigh;
And lyre, and trump, and wreathed flowers;
Nay more, for freedom, health, applause,
And even humanity's lost laws!

Why am I chased from human kind?
What Circe in the lair
Of brutes, thus keeps me spell-confined?
Nests have the birds of air,
The very beasts in caverns find
Shelter and rest, and share
At least kind nature's gifts and laws,
For each his food and water draws
From wood and fountain, where,
Wholesome and pure and safe, it was
Furnished by heaven's own care;
And all is bright and blest, because
Freedom and health are there!

I merit punishment, I own;
I erred, I must confess it; yet
The fault was in the tongue alone,

The heart is true. Forgive! forget!
I beg for mercy, and my woes
May claim with pity to be heard;
If to my prayers your ears you close,
Where can I hope for one kind word
In my extremity of ill?
And if the pang of hope deferred
Arise from discord in your will,
For me must be revived again
The fate of Metius and the pain.

I pray you, then, renew for me
The charm that made you doubly fair,
In sweet and virtuous harmony
Urging, resistlessly, my prayer;
With him for whose loved sake, I swear
I more lament my fault than pains,
Strange and unheard of as they are.

Torquato Tasso. Tr. Richard Henry Wilde.

TO SCIPIO GONZAGA.

SURE Pity, Scipio, on earth has fled
From royal breasts to seek abode in heaven;
For if she were not banished, scorned, or dead,
Would not some ear to my complaints be given?
Is noble faith at pleasure to be riven,
Though freely pledged that I had naught to dread,
And I by endless outrage to be driven
To worse than death, — the deathlike life I've led?
For this is of the quick a grave; and here

Am I, a living, breathing corpse interred,
To go not forth, till prisoned in my bier;
O earth! O heaven! if love and truth are heard,
Or honor, fame, and virtue worth a tear,
Let not my prayers be fruitless or deferred!

Torquato Tasso. Tr. Richard Henry Wilde.

Fiesole.

THE FIG-TREES OF GHERARDESCA.

YE brave old fig-trees! worthy pair!
Beneath whose shade I often lay
To breathe awhile a cooler air,
And shield me from the dusts of day.

Strangers have visited the spot,
Led thither by my parting song;
Alas! the stranger found you not,
And curst the poet's lying tongue.

Vanished each venerable head,
Nor bough nor leaf could tell them where
To look for you, alive or dead;
Unheeded was my distant prayer.

I might have hoped (if hope had ever
Been mine) that time or storm alone
Your firm alliance would dissever, —
Hath mortal hand your strength o'erthrown?

Before an axe had bitten through
The bleeding bark, some tender thought,
If not for me, at least for you,
On younger bosoms might have wrought.

Age after age your honeyed fruit
From boys unseen through foliage fell
On lifted apron; now is mute
The girlish glee! Old friends, farewell!

Walter Savage Landor.

Florence.

FLORENCE IN THE OLDEN TIME.

FLORENCE, within the ancient boundary
From which she taketh still her tierce and nones,
Abode in quiet, temperate and chaste.
No golden chain she had, nor coronal,
Nor ladies shod with sandal shoon, nor girdle
That caught the eye more than the person did.
Not yet the daughter at her birth struck fear
Into the father, for the time and dower
Did not o'errun this side or that the measure.
No houses had she void of families,
Not yet had thither come Sardanapalus
To show what in a chamber can be done;
Not yet surpassed had Montemalo been
By your Uccellatojo, which surpassed
Shall in its downfall be as in its rise.
Bellincion Berti saw I go begirt

With leather and with bone, and from the mirror
His dame depart without a painted face;
And him of Nerli saw, and him of Vecchio,
Contented with their simple suits of buff,
And with the spindle and the flax their dames.
O fortunate women! and each one was certain
Of her own burial-place, and none as yet
For sake of France was in her bed deserted.
One o'er the cradle kept her studious watch,
And in her lullaby the language used
That first delights the fathers and the mothers;
Another, drawing tresses from her distaff,
Told o'er among her family the tales
Of Trojans and of Fesole and Rome.
As great a marvel then would have been held
A Lapo Salterello, a Cianghella,
As Cincinnatus or Cornelia now.

Dante Alighieri. Tr. H. W. Longfellow.

FLORENCE.

DERIVED from thee, O Florence, and thy son,
Be toucht, dear land, a little for thy child!
Seem to his woes compassionate and mild,
Since in thy arms his life was first begun
And cherisht. From our birth our fate must run
Assigned; as to the bird his wood-notes wild,
And flight! — but of whatever hopes beguiled,
In this one instance my request be done:
That not in death, as in my griefs, alone,
However long estranged from thee I rove,

Thee in my ashes I may call my own,
Reposing by that father whom I love,
By whom so high thy fame and worth have flown.
Grant this sole boon, whatever thou remove.

Piero de' Medici. Tr. Capel Lofft.

LINES WRITTEN ON APPROACHING FLORENCE.

FLORENCE! the name sounds sweetly to my ear,
Familiar and yet strange; on dear home lips
'T is music, and from Tuscan tongue it slips
Like dropping honey, syllabled and clear.

My name, yet not my name! Myself forgot,
Hither I turn my eager steps, to seek
The air those great ones breathed, whom I, though weak,
May follow worshipping, attaining not!

What is there homelike in the flower-girt place?
Why smiles the Arno, while the encircling hills
Enwrap me closer, and my spirit thrills
With a vague joy whose springs I cannot trace?

Oft have I mused on the old glorious time,
When painters drew with pencils dipped in flame;
When genius reigned, and tyrants writhed in shame
'Neath Dante's twisted scourge of threefold rhyme.

And, meditating thus, while reverence grew
To love, and love to self-forgetfulness,

While fancy wandered, may my steps no less
Have followed, dreaming, farther than I knew?

And yet, not so. This is no foreign air,
That once I breathed, then left, again to roam!
Thy fragrant breezes whisper, "This is home, —
My namesake city, Florence, called the Fair!"

Sometimes in music comes a sudden strain,
Mid unfamiliar melodies most sweet;
The heart leaps forth the welcome tones to greet,
But its past echo memory seeks in vain.

New, and yet old, it lingers on the mind
As with remembered sweetness, and it fills
The soul with longing for the heavenly hills,
And angel harmonies it left behind.

Perchance 't was wafted o'er the ocean dim
That lies beyond the mystery of birth;
And the young spirit, mid the songs of earth,
Could not forget the seraph's cradle hymn!

Whate'er the heart is tuned to is its own,
And, loving, we claim kinship. So I love,
O land! whose distant glories thus could move
My heart until, unseen, I deemed thee known!

In other climes thy skies have on me smiled,
The beautiful to me has borne thy name;
O city of my heart, thy love I claim, —
I am not worthy, but I am thy child!

Florence Smith.

FLORENCE.

OF all the fairest cities of the earth
None is so fair as Florence. 'T is a gem
Of purest ray; and what a light broke forth
When it emerged from darkness! Search within,
Without; all is enchantment! 'T is the past
Contending with the present; and in turn
Each has the mastery.
In this chapel wrought
One of the few, Nature's interpreters,
The few whom genius gives as lights to shine,
Masaccio; and he slumbers underneath.
Wouldst thou behold his monument? Look round!
And know that where we stand stood oft and long,
Oft till the day was gone, Raphael himself;
Nor he alone, so great the ardor there,
Such, while it reigned, the generous rivalry;
He and how many as at once called forth,
Anxious to learn of those who came before,
To steal a spark from their authentic fire,
Theirs who first broke the universal gloom,
Sons of the Morning.
On that ancient seat,
The seat of stone that runs along the wall,
South of the church, east of the belfry-tower,
(Thou canst not miss it,) in the sultry time
Would Dante sit conversing, and with those
Who little thought that in his hand he held
The balance, and assigned at his good pleasure

To each his place in the invisible world,
To some an upper region, some a lower;
Many a transgressor sent to his account,
Long ere in Florence numbered with the dead;
The body still as full of life and stir
At home, abroad; still and as oft inclined
To eat, drink, sleep; still clad as others were,
And at noonday, where men were wont to meet,
Met as continually; when the soul went,
Relinquished to a demon, and by him
(So says the bard, and who can read and doubt?)
Dwelt in and governed.

Sit thee down awhile;
Then, by the gates so marvellously wrought,
That they might serve to be the gates of Heaven,
Enter the Baptistery. That place he loved,
Loved as his own; and in his visits there
Well might he take delight! For when a child,
Playing, as many are wont, with venturous feet
Near and yet nearer to the sacred font,
Slipped and fell in, he flew and rescued him,
Flew with an energy, a violence,
That broke the marble, — a mishap ascribed
To evil motives; his, alas, to lead
A life of trouble, and erelong to leave
All things most dear to him, erelong to know
How salt another's bread is, and the toil
Of going up and down another's stairs.

Nor then forget that chamber of the dead,
Where the gigantic shapes of night and day,
Turned into stone, rest everlastingly;

Yet still are breathing, and shed round at noon
A twofold influence, — only to be felt, —
A light, a darkness, mingling each with each;
Both and yet neither. There, from age to age,
Two ghosts are sitting on their sepulchres.
That is the Duke Lorenzo. Mark him well.
He meditates, his head upon his hand.
What from beneath his helm-like bonnet scowls?
Is it a face, or but an eyeless skull?
'T is lost in shade; yet, like the basilisk,
It fascinates, and is intolerable.
His mien is noble, most majestical!
Then most so, when the distant choir is heard
At morn or eve, — nor fail thou to attend
On that thrice-hallowed day, when all are there;
When all, propitiating with solemn songs,
Visit the dead. Then wilt thou feel his power!
But let not sculpture, painting, poesy,
Or they, the masters of these mighty spells,
Detain us. Our first homage is to virtue.
Where, in what dungeon of the citadel,
(It must be known, — the writing on the wall
Cannot be gone, — 't was with the blade cut in,
Ere, on his knees to God, he slew himself,)
Did he, the last, the noblest citizen,[1]
Breathe out his soul, lest in the torturing hour
He might accuse the guiltless?
That debt paid,
But with a sigh, a tear for human frailty,
We may return, and once more give a loose

[1] Filippo Strozzi.

To the delighted spirit, — worshipping,
In her small temple of rich workmanship,
Venus herself, who, when she left the skies,
Came hither.

Samuel Rogers.

FLORENCE.

THE brightness of the world, O thou once free,
And always fair, rare land of courtesy!
O Florence! with the Tuscan fields and hills,
And famous Arno, fed with all their rills;
Thou brightest star of star-bright Italy!
Rich, ornate, populous, all treasures thine,
The golden corn, the olive, and the vine.
Fair cities, gallant mansions, castles old,
And forests, where beside his leafy hold
The sullen boar hath heard the distant horn,
And whets his tusks against the gnarled thorn;
Palladian palace with its storied halls;
Fountains, where Love lies listening to their falls;
Gardens, where flings the bridge its airy span,
And Nature makes her happy home with man;
Where many a gorgeous flower is duly fed
With its own rill, on its own spangled bed,
And wreathes the marble urn, or leans its head,
A mimic mourner, that with veil withdrawn
Weeps liquid gems, the presents of the dawn;
Thine all delights, and every muse is thine;
And more than all, the embrace and intertwine
Of all with all in gay and twinkling dance!
Mid gods of Greece and warriors of romance,

See! Boccace sits, unfolding on his knees
The new-found roll of old Mæonides;
But from his mantle's fold, and near the heart,
Peers Ovid's holy book of Love's sweet smart!

Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

PIAZZA DELLA SIGNORIA.

AMONG the awful forms that stand assembled
In the great square of Florence, may be seen
That Cosmo, not the father of his country,
Not he so styled, but he who played the tyrant.
Clad in rich armor like a paladin,
But with his helmet off, in kingly state,
Aloft he sits upon his horse of brass;
And they who read the legend underneath
Go and pronounce him happy. Yet there is
A chamber at Grosseto, that, if walls
Could speak and tell of what is done within,
Would turn your admiration into pity.
Half of what passed died with him; but the rest,
All he discovered when the fit was on,
All that, by those who listened, could be gleaned
From broken sentences, and starts in sleep,
Is told, and by an honest chronicler.

Two of his sons, Giovanni and Garzia,
(The eldest had not seen his sixteenth summer,)
Went to the chase; but one of them, Giovanni,
His best beloved, the glory of his house,
Returned not; and at close of day was found
Bathed in his innocent blood. Too well, alas,

The trembling Cosmo guessed the deed, the doer;
And, having caused the body to be borne
In secret to that chamber, at an hour
When all slept sound, save the disconsolate mother,
Who little thought of what was yet to come,
And lived but to be told, — he bade Garzia
Arise and follow him. Holding in one hand
A winking lamp, and in the other a key
Massive and dungeon-like, thither he led;
And, having entered in and locked the door,
The father fixed his eyes upon the son,
And closely questioned him. No change betrayed
Or guilt or fear. Then Cosmo lifted up
The bloody sheet. "Look there! look there!" he cried,
"Blood calls for blood, — and from a father's hand!
Unless thyself wilt save him that sad office."
"What!" he exclaimed, when, shuddering at the sight,
The boy breathed out, "I stood but on my guard."
"Dar'st thou then blacken one who never wronged thee,
Who would not set his foot upon a worm?
Yes, thou must die, lest others fall by thee,
And thou shouldst be the slayer of us all."
Then from Garzia's side he took the dagger,
That fatal one which spilt his brother's blood;
And, kneeling on the ground, "Great God!" he cried,
"Grant me the strength to do an act of justice,
Thou knowest what it costs me; but, alas,
How can I spare myself, sparing none else?
Grant me the strength, the will, — and, O, forgive
The sinful soul of a most wretched son.
'T is a most wretched father who implores it."

Long on Garzia's neck he hung, and wept
Tenderly, long pressed him to his bosom;
And then, but while he held him by the arm,
Thrusting him backward, turned away his face,
And stabbed him to the heart.
Well might De Thou,
When in his youth he came to Cosmo's court,
Think on the past; and, as he wandered through
The ancient palace, — through those ample spaces
Silent, deserted, — stop awhile to dwell
Upon two portraits there, drawn on the wall
Together, as of two in bonds of love,
One in a Cardinal's habit, one in black,
Those of the unhappy brothers, and infer
From the deep silence that his questions drew,
The terrible truth.
Well might he heave a sigh
For poor humanity, when he beheld
That very Cosmo shaking o'er his fire,
Drowsy and deaf and inarticulate,
Wrapt in his nightgown, o'er a sick man's mess,
In the last stage, — death-struck and deadly pale;
His wife, another, not his Eleanora,
At once his nurse and his interpreter.

Samuel Rogers.

THE STATUE AND THE BUST.

THERE 's a palace in Florence, the world knows well,
And a statue watches it from the square,
And this story of both do the townsmen tell.

Ages ago, a lady there,
At the furthest window facing the east,
Asked, "Who rides by with the royal air?"

The bridesmaids' prattle around her ceased:
She leaned forth, one on either hand;
They saw how the blush of the bride increased,

They felt by its beats her heart expand,
As one at each ear, and both in a breath,
Whispered, "The Great-Duke Ferdinand."

That selfsame instant, underneath,
The Duke rode past in his idle way,
Empty and fine like a swordless sheath.

Gay he rode, with a friend as gay,
Till he threw his head back, — "Who is she?"
"A bride the Riccardi brings home to-day."

Hair in heaps laid heavily
Over a pale brow spirit-pure, —
Carved like the heart of the coal-black tree,

Crisped like a war-steed's encolure, —
Which vainly sought to dissemble her eyes
Of the blackest black our eyes endure.

And lo, a blade for a knight's emprise
Filled the fine empty sheath of a man, —
The Duke grew straightway brave and wise.

He looked at her, as a lover can;
She looked at him, as one who awakes, —
The past was a sleep, and her life began.

As love so ordered for both their sakes,
A feast was held that selfsame night
In the pile which the mighty shadow makes.

(For Via Larga is three-parts light,
But the palace overshadows one,
Because of a crime which may God requite!

To Florence and God the wrong was done,
Through the first republic's murder there
By Cosimo and his cursed son.)

The Duke (with the statue's face in the square)
Turned in the midst of his multitude
At the bright approach of the bridal pair.

Face to face the lovers stood
A single minute and no more,
While the bridegroom bent as a man subdued, —

Bowed till his bonnet brushed the floor, —
For the Duke on the lady a kiss conferred,
As the courtly custom was of yore.

In a minute can lovers exchange a word?
If a word did pass, which I do not think,
Only one out of the thousand heard.

That was the bridegroom. At day's brink
He and his bride were alone at last
In a bedchamber by a taper's blink.

Calmly he said that her lot was cast,
That the door she had passed was shut on her
Till the final catafalk repassed.

The world, meanwhile, its noise and stir,
Through a certain window facing the east
She might watch like a convent's chronicler.

Since passing the door might lead to a feast,
And a feast might lead to so much beside,
He, of many evils, chose the least.

* * *

Meanwhile, worse fates than a lover's fate
Who daily may ride and lean and look
Where his lady watches behind the grate!

And she — she watched the square like a book
Holding one picture, and only one,
Which daily to find she undertook.

When the picture was reached the book was done,
And she turned from it all night to scheme
Of tearing it out for herself next sun.

Weeks grew months, years, — gleam by gleam
The glory dropped from youth and love,
And both perceived they had dreamed a dream,

Which hovered as dreams do, still above,
But who can take a dream for truth?
O, hide our eyes from the next remove!

One day, as the lady saw her youth
Depart, and the silver thread that streaked
Her hair, and, worn by the serpent's tooth,

The brow so puckered, the chin so peaked, —
And wondered who the woman was,
So hollow-eyed and haggard-cheeked,

Fronting her silent in the glass, —
"Summon here," she suddenly said,
"Before the rest of my old self pass,

"Him, the carver, a hand to aid,
Who moulds the clay no love will change,
And fixes a beauty never to fade.

"Let Robbia's craft so apt and strange
Arrest the remains of young and fair,
And rivet them while the seasons range.

"Make me a face on the window there
Waiting as ever, mute the while,
My love to pass below in the square!"

* * *

But long ere Robbia's cornice, fine
With flowers and fruits which leaves enlace,
Was set where now is the empty shrine,

(With, leaning out of a bright blue space,
As a ghost might from a chink of sky,
The passionate pale lady's face,

Eying ever with earnest eye
And quick-turned neck at its breathless stretch,
Some one who ever passes by,)

The Duke sighed like the simplest wretch
In Florence, "So my dream escapes!
Will its record stay?" And he bade them fetch

Some subtle fashioner of shapes, —
"Can the soul, the will, die out of a man
Ere his body find the grave that gapes?

"John of Douay shall work my plan,
Mould me on horseback here aloft,
Alive, (the subtle artisan!)

"In the very square I cross so oft!
That men may admire, when future suns
Shall touch the eyes to a purpose soft,

"While the mouth and the brow are brave in bronze, —
Admire and say, 'When he was alive,
How he would take his pleasure once!'

"And it shall go hard but I contrive
To listen meanwhile and laugh in my tomb
At indolence which aspires to strive."

* * *

Robert Browning.

SANTA CROCE.

IN Santa Croce's holy precincts lie
Ashes which make it holier, dust which is
Even in itself an immortality,
Though there were nothing save the past, and this
The particle of those sublimities
Which have relapsed to chaos; — here repose
Angelo's, Alfieri's bones, and his,
The starry Galileo, with his woes;
Here Machiavelli's earth returned to whence it rose.

These are four minds, which, like the elements,
Might furnish forth creation; — Italy!
Time, which hath wronged thee with ten thousand rents
Of thine imperial garment, shall deny,
And hath denied, to every other sky,
Spirits which soar from ruin: thy decay
Is still impregnate with divinity,
Which gilds it with revivifying ray;
Such as the great of yore, Canova is to-day.

But where repose the all Etruscan three, —
Dante, and Petrarch, and, scarce less than they,
The Bard of Prose, creative spirit! he
Of the Hundred Tales of love, — where did they lay
Their bones, distinguished from our common clay
In death as life? Are they resolved to dust,
And have their country's marbles naught to say?
Could not her quarries furnish forth one bust?
Did they not to her breast their filial earth intrust?

Ungrateful Florence! Dante sleeps afar,
Like Scipio, buried by the upbraiding shore;
Thy factions, in their worse than civil war,
Proscribed the bard whose name forevermore
Their children's children would in vain adore
With the remorse of ages; and the crown
Which Petrarch's laureate brow supremely wore,
Upon a far and foreign soil had grown,
His life, his fame, his grave, though rifled,—not thine own.

Boccaccio to his parent earth bequeathed
His dust, — and lies it not her Great among,
With many a sweet and solemn requiem breathed
O'er him who formed the Tuscan's siren tongue, —
That music in itself, whose sounds are song,
The poetry of speech? No; even his tomb
Uptorn, must bear the hyena bigots wrong,
No more amidst the meaner dead find room,
Nor claim a passing sigh, because it told for whom.

And Santa Croce wants their mighty dust;
Yet for this want more noted, as of yore
The Cæsar's pageant, shorn of Brutus' bust,
Did but of Rome's best son remind her more.
Happier Ravenna! on thy hoary shore,
Fortress of falling empire, honored sleeps
The immortal exile; — Arqua, too, her store
Of tuneful relics proudly claims and keeps,
While Florence vainly begs her banished dead, and weeps.

Lord Byron.

SANTA MARIA NOVELLA.

OR enter, in your Florence wanderings,
Santa Maria Novella church. You pass
The left stair, where, at plague-time, Macchiavel
Saw one with set fair face as in a glass,
Dressed out against the fear of death and hell,
Rustling her silks in pauses of the mass,
To keep the thought off how her husband fell,
When she left home, stark dead across her feet, —
The stair leads up to what Orgagna gave
Of Dante's dæmons; but you, passing it,
Ascend the right stair of the farther nave,
To muse in a small chapel scarcely lit
By Cimabue's Virgin. Bright and brave,
That picture was accounted, mark, of old!
A king stood bare before its sovran grace;
A reverent people shouted to behold
The picture, not the king; and even the place
Containing such a miracle, grew bold,
Named the Glad Borgo from that beauteous face,
Which thrilled the artist, after work, to think
That his ideal Mary-smile should stand
So very near him! — he, within the brink
Of all that glory, let in by his hand
With too divine a rashness! Yet none shrink
Who gaze here now, — albeit the thing is planned
Sublimely in the thought's simplicity.
The Virgin, throned in empyreal state,
Minds only the young babe upon her knee;

While, each side, angels bear the royal weight,
Prostrated meekly, smiling tenderly
Oblivion of their wings! the Child thereat
Stretches its hand like God. If any should,
Because of some stiff draperies and loose joints,
Gaze scorn down from the heights of Raffaelhood,
On Cimabue's picture, — Heaven anoints
The head of no such critic, and his blood
The poet's curse strikes full on, and appoints
To ague and cold spasms forevermore.
A noble picture! worthy of the shout
Wherewith along the streets the people bore
Its cherub faces, which the sun threw out
Until they stooped and entered the church door!

Elizabeth Barrett Browning.

GIOTTO'S CAMPANILE.

ENCHASED with precious marbles, pure and rare,
How gracefully it soars, and seems the while
From every polished stage to laugh and smile,
Playing with sportive gleams of lucid air!
Fit resting-place methinks its summit were
For a descended angel! happy isle,
Mid life's rough sea of sorrow, force, and guile,
For saint of royal race, or vestal fair,
In this seclusion, — call it not a prison, —
Cloistering a bosom innocent and lonely.
O Tuscan Priestess! gladly would I watch
All night one note of thy loud hymn to catch
Sent forth to greet the sun, when first, new-risen,
He shines on that aerial station only!

Aubrey de Vere.

GIOTTO'S TOWER.

HOW many lives, made beautiful and sweet
By self-devotion and by self-restraint,
Whose pleasure is to run without complaint
On unknown errands of the Paraclete,
Wanting the reverence of unshodden feet,
Fail of the nimbus which the artists paint
Around the shining forehead of the saint,
And are in their completeness incomplete!
In the old Tuscan town stands Giotto's tower,
The lily of Florence blossoming in stone, —
A vision, a delight, and a desire, —
The builder's perfect and centennial flower,
That in the night of ages bloomed alone,
But wanting still the glory of the spire.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

THE OLD BRIDGE AT FLORENCE.

TADDEO GADDI built me. I am old,
Five centuries old. I plant my foot of stone
Upon the Arno, as St. Michael's own
Was planted on the dragon. Fold by fold
Beneath me as it struggles, I behold
Its glistening scales. Twice hath it overthrown
My kindred and companions. Me alone
It moveth not, but is by me controlled.
I can remember when the Medici
Were driven from Florence; longer still ago

The final wars of Ghibelline and Guelf.
Florence adorns me with her jewelry;
And when I think that Michael Angelo
Hath leaned on me, I glory in myself.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

SAN MINIATO.

WHILE slow on Miniato's height I roam,
And backward look to Brunelleschi's dome,
'T is strange to think that here on many a day
Old Michael Angelo has paced his way:
And watching Florence, in his bosom found
A nobler world than that which lies around.
To him, perhaps, the ghost of Dante came
At sunset, with his pride of mournful fame.
By me the twain, the bard and sculptor stand,
With strong lip gazing and uplifted hand:
The great, the sad, fighters in ages past,
With their full peace fill e'en the weak at last.

John Sterling.

CASA GUIDI WINDOWS.

SHE came, whom Casa Guidi's chambers knew,
And know more proudly, an immortal, now;
The air without a star was shivered through
With the resistless radiance of her brow,
And glimmering landscapes from the darkness grew.

Thin, phantom-like; and yet she brought me rest,
Unspoken words, an understood command

Sealed weary lids with sleep, together pressed
In clasping quiet wandering hand to hand,
And smoothed the folded cloth above the breast.

Now, looking through these windows, where the day
Shines on a terrace splendid with the gold
Of autumn shrubs, and green with glossy bay,
Once more her face, re-made from dust, I hold
In light so clear it cannot pass away: —

The quiet brow; the face so frail and fair
For such a voice of song; the steady eye,
Where shone the spirit fated to outwear
Its fragile house; — and on her features lie
The soft half-shadows of her drooping hair.

Who could forget those features, having known?
Whose memory do his kindling reverence wrong
That heard the soft Ionian flute, whose tone
Changed with the silver trumpet of her song?
No sweeter airs from woman's lips were blown.

Ah, in the silence she has left behind
How many a sorrowing voice of life is still!
Songless she left the land that cannot find
Song for its heroes; and the Roman hill,
Once free, shall for her ghost the laurel wind.

The tablet tells you, "Here she wrote and died,"
And grateful Florence bids the record stand:
Here bend Italian love and English pride

Above her grave, — and one remoter land,
Free as her prayers could make it, at their side.

I will not doubt the vision: yonder see
The moving clouds that speak of freedom won!
And life, new-lighted, with a lark-like glee
Through Casa Guidi windows hails the sun,
Grown from the rest her spirit gave to me.

Bayard Taylor.

THE VENUS DE' MEDICI.

BUT Arno wins us to the fair white walls,
Where the Etrurian Athens claims and keeps
A softer feeling for her fairy halls.
Girt by her theatre of hills, she reaps
Her corn and wine and oil, and Plenty leaps
To laughing life, with her redundant horn.
Along the banks where smiling Arno sweeps
Was modern luxury of commerce born,
And buried learning rose, redeemed to a new morn.

There, too, the Goddess loves in stone, and fills
The air around with beauty; we inhale
The ambrosial aspect, which, beheld, instils
Part of its immortality; the veil
Of heaven is half undrawn; within the pale
We stand, and in that form and face behold
What mind can make, when Nature's self would fail;
And to the fond idolaters of old
Envy the innate flash which such a soul could mould.

We gaze and turn away, and know not where,
Dazzled and drunk with beauty, till the heart
Reels with its fulness; there, forever there,
Chained to the chariot of triumphal art,
We stand as captives, and would not depart.
Away! there need no words, nor terms precise,
The paltry jargon of the marble mart,
Where pedantry gulls folly, — we have eyes:
Blood, pulse, and breast confirm the Dardan Shepherd's prize.

Appearedst thou not to Paris in this guise?
Or to more deeply blest Anchises? or,
In all thy perfect goddess-ship, when lies
Before thee thy own vanquished lord of war?
And gazing in thy face as toward a star,
Laid on thy lap, his eyes to thee upturn,
Feeding on thy sweet cheek! while thy lips are
With lava kisses melting while they burn,
Showered on his eyelids, brow, and mouth, as from an urn!

Glowing, and circumfused in speechless love,
Their full divinity inadequate
That feeling to express, or to improve,
The gods become as mortals, and man's fate
Has moments like their brightest; but the weight
Of earth recoils upon us; — let it go!
We can recall such visions, and create,
From what has been, or might be, things which grow
Into thy statue's form, and look like gods below.

Lord Byron.

OLD PICTURES IN FLORENCE.

THE morn when first it thunders in March,
The eel in the pond gives a leap, they say.
As I leaned and looked over the aloed arch
Of the villa-gate, this warm March day,
No flash snapt, no dumb thunder rolled
In the valley beneath, where, white and wide,
Washed by the morning's water-gold,
Florence lay out on the mountain-side.

River and bridge and street and square
Lay mine, as much at my beck and call,
Through the live translucent bath of air,
As the sights in a magic crystal ball.
And of all I saw and of all I praised,
The most to praise and the best to see,
Was the startling bell-tower Giotto raised:
But why did it more than startle me?

Giotto, how, with that soul of yours,
Could you play me false who loved you so?
Some slights if a certain heart endures
It feels, I would have your fellows know!
Faith, I perceive not why I should care
To break a silence that suits them best,
But the thing grows somewhat hard to bear
When I find a Giotto join the rest.

On the arch where olives overhead
Print the blue sky with twig and leaf

(That sharp-curled leaf they never shed),
'Twixt the aloes I used to lean in chief,
And mark through the winter afternoons,
By a gift God grants me now and then,
In the mild decline of those suns like moons,
Who walked in Florence, besides her men.

They might chirp and chaffer, come and go
For pleasure or profit, her men alive, —
My business was hardly with them, I trow,
But with empty cells of the human hive;
With the chapter-room, the cloister-porch,
The church's apsis, aisle or nave,
Its crypt, one fingers along with a torch, —
Its face, set full for the sun to shave.

Wherever a fresco peels and drops,
Wherever an outline weakens and wanes
Till the latest life in the painting stops,
Stands one whom each fainter pulse-tick pains!
One, wishful each scrap should clutch its brick,
Each tinge not wholly escape the plaster, —
A lion who dies of an ass's kick,
The wronged great soul of an ancient master.

For O, this world and the wrong it does!
They are safe in heaven with their backs to it,
The Michaels and Rafaels you hum and buzz
Round the works of, you of the little wit;
Do their eyes contract to the earth's old scope,
Now that they see God face to face,
And have all attained to be poets, I hope?
'T is their holiday now, in any case.

Robert Browning.

MASACCIO.

IN THE BRANCACCI CHAPEL.

HE came to Florence long ago,
And painted here these walls, that shone
For Raphael and for Angelo,
With secrets deeper than his own,
Then shrank into the dark again,
And died, we know not how or when.

The shadows deepened, and I turned
Half sadly from the fresco grand;
"And is this," mused I, "all ye earned,
High-vaulted brain and cunning hand,
That ye to greater men could teach
The skill yourselves could never reach?"

"And who were they," I mused, "that wrought
Through pathless wilds, with labor long,
The highways of our daily thought?
Who reared those towers of earliest song
That lift us from the throng to peace
Remote in sunny silences?"

Out clanged the Ave Mary bells,
And to my heart this message came:
Each clamorous throat among them tells
What strong-souled martyrs died in flame

To make it possible that thou
Shouldst here with brother-sinners bow.

Thoughts that great hearts once broke for, we
Breathe cheaply in the common air;
The dust we trample heedlessly
Throbbed once in saints and heroes rare,
Who perished, opening for their race
New pathways to the commonplace.

Henceforth, when rings the health to those
Who live in story and in song,
O nameless dead, that now repose
Safe in Oblivion's chambers strong,
One cup of recognition true
Shall silently be drained to you!

James Russell Lowell.

UCELLO.

PAOLO UCELLO, a Florentine painter at the end of the fourteenth century. His frescos can be seen in Santa Maria Novella. He was fond of introducing birds and animals into his pictures. He was among the first to introduce perspective lines.

THIS is the house where once Ucello lived,
Through this same doorway passed his trembling feet,
Beyond the gates of Florence took their way, —
A quaint, sad figure in the busy street.

Upon these walls, now dark and dim with age
(Yet to all time some touches may endure),

Live the dumb creatures that he loved so well,
Each with its own poetic portraiture.

A meek, most fanciful, and timid soul,
Daily to loving birds he talked and read,
While they, with tender warblings soft and low,
Fluttered forever round his patient head.

And often did these feathered songsters bring
(As to St. Francis in the days of yore),
When all the world looked dark and drear to him,
Most heavenly solace from their bounteous store.

With the celestial melody there grew
Strange computations working in his brain;
Dimensions visible of airy lines,
Dreamed of, and thought, and dreamed of o'er again.

He took from heaven immeasurable gifts,
And gave them to the world, before untaught;
He held his soul harmonious with the spheres,
And problems solved, unknown to mortal thought.

Yet for all this, gay Florence loved him not,
Victorious, bright with laughter and with song;
In him she only saw a meek, sad soul,
Of little worth amid her brilliant throng.

Yet now she crowns him proudly as her son,
And gives to him at last immortal fame,
And all can read who pass the crowded way
Engraved upon this door Ucello's name.

Sarah D. Clarke.

DANTE ALIGHIERI.

OF Florence and of Beatrice
Servant and singer from of old,
O'er Dante's heart in youth had tolled
The knell that gave his lady peace;
And now in manhood flew the dart
Wherewith his city pierced his heart.

Yet if his lady's home above
Was heaven, on earth she filled his soul;
And if his city held control
To cast the body forth to rove,
The soul could soar from earth's vain throng,
And heaven and hell fulfil the song.

Follow his feet's appointed way, —
But little light we find that clears
The darkness of the exiled years.
Follow his spirit's journey, — nay,
What fires are blent, what winds are blown
On paths his feet may tread alone?

Yet of the twofold life he led
In chainless thought and fettered will
Some glimpses reach us, — somewhat still
Of the steep stairs and bitter bread, —
Of the soul's quest whose stern avow
For years had made him haggard now.

Alas! the sacred song whereto
Both heaven and earth had set their hand
Not only at fame's gate did stand
Knocking to claim the passage through,
But toiled to ope that heavier door
Which Florence shut forevermore.

Shall not his birth's baptismal town
One last high presage yet fulfil,
And at that font in Florence still
His forehead take the laurel-crown?
O God! or shall dead souls deny
The undying soul its prophecy?

Ay, 't is their hour. Not yet forgot
The bitter words he spoke that day
When for some great charge far away
Her rulers his acceptance sought;
"And if I go, who stays?" so rose
His scorn; "and if I stay, who goes?"

"Lo! thou art gone now, and we stay,"
The curled lips mutter; "and no star
Is from thy mortal path so far
As streets where childhood knew the way.
To heaven and hell thy feet may win,
But thine own house they come not in."

Therefore, the loftier rose the song
To touch the secret things of God,
The deeper pierced the hate that trod

On base men's track who wrought the wrong;
Till the soul's effluence came to be
Its own exceeding agony.

Arriving only to depart,
From court to court, from land to land,
Like flame within the naked hand
His body bore his burning heart,
That still on Florence strove to bring
God's fire for a burnt-offering.

* * *

Dante Gabriel Rossetti.

THE CAMPAGNA OF FLORENCE.

'TIS morning. Let us wander through the fields,
Where Cimabuè found a shepherd-boy
Tracing his idle fancies on the ground;
And let us from the top of Fiesole,
Whence Galileo's glass by night observed
The phases of the moon, look round below
On Arno's vale, where the dove-colored steer
Is ploughing up and down among the vines,
While many a careless note is sung aloud,
Filling the air with sweetness, — and on thee,
Beautiful Florence, all within thy walls,
Thy groves and gardens, pinnacles and towers,
Drawn to our feet.

From that small spire, just caught
By the bright ray, that church among the rest
By one of old distinguished as The Bride,

Let us in thought pursue (what can we better?)
Those who assembled there at matin-time;
Who, when vice revelled and along the street
Tables were set, what time the bearer's bell
Rang to demand the dead at every door,
Came out into the meadows; and, awhile
Wandering in idleness, but not in folly,
Sate down in the high grass and in the shade
Of many a tree sun-proof, day after day,
When all was still and nothing to be heard
But the cicala's voice among the olives,
Relating in a ring, to banish care,
Their hundred tales.
Round the green hill they went,
Round underneath, — first to a splendid house,
Gherardi, as an old tradition runs,
That on the left, just rising from the vale;
A place for luxury, — the painted rooms,
The open galleries and middle court
Not unprepared, fragrant and gay with flowers.
Then westward to another, nobler yet;
That on the right, now known as the Palmieri,
Where art with nature vied, — a paradise
With verdurous walls, and many a trellised walk
All rose and jasmine, many a twilight-glade
Crossed by the deer. Then to the Ladies' Vale;
And the clear lake, that as by magic seemed
To lift up to the surface every stone
Of lustre there, and the diminutive fish
Innumerable, dropt with crimson and gold,
Now motionless, now glancing to the sun.

Who has not dwelt on their voluptuous day?
The morning-banquet by the fountain-side,
While the small birds rejoiced on every bough;
The dance that followed, and the noontide slumber;
Then the tales told in turn, as round they lay
On carpets, the fresh water, murmuring
And the short interval of pleasant talk
Till supper-time, when many a siren-voice
Sung down the stars; and, as they left the sky,
The torches, planted in the sparkling grass,
And everywhere among the glowing flowers,
Burnt bright and brighter. He, whose dream it was,
(It was no more,) sleeps in a neighboring vale;
Sleeps in the church, where, in his ear, I ween,
The friar poured out his wondrous catalogue;
A ray, imprimis, of the star that shone
To the wise men; a vialful of sounds,
The musical chimes of the great bells that hung
In Solomon's Temple; and, though last not least,
A feather from the angel Gabriel's wing,
Dropt in the Virgin's chamber. That dark ridge,
Stretching southeast, conceals it from our sight;
Not so his lowly roof and scanty farm,
His copse and rill, if yet a trace be left,
Who lived in Val di Pesa, suffering long
Want and neglect and (far, far worse) reproach,
With calm, unclouded mind. The glimmering tower
On the gray rock beneath, his landmark once,
Now serves for ours, and points out where he ate
His bread with cheerfulness. Who sees him not
('T is his own sketch — he drew it from himself)

Laden with cages from his shoulder slung,
And sallying forth, while yet the morn is gray,
To catch a thrush on every lime-twig there;
Or in the wood among his wood-cutters;
Or in the tavern by the highway-side
At tric-trac with the miller; or at night,
Doffing his rustic suit, and, duly clad,
Entering his closet, and among his books,
Among the great of every age and clime,
A numerous court, turning to whom he pleased,
Questioning each why he did this or that,
And learning how to overcome the fear
Of poverty and death?

Nearer we hail
Thy sunny slope, Arcetri, sung of old
For its green wine; dearer to me, to most,
As dwelt on by that great astronomer,
Seven years a prisoner at the city-gate,
Let in but in his grave-clothes. Sacred be
His villa, (justly was it called The Gem!)
Sacred the lawn, where many a cypress threw
Its length of shadow, while he watched the stars!
Sacred the vineyard, where, while yet his sight
Glimmered, at blush of morn he dressed his vines,
Chanting aloud in gayety of heart
Some verse of Ariosto! There, unseen,
In manly beauty Milton stood before him,
Gazing with reverent awe, — Milton, his guest,
Just then come forth, all life and enterprise;
He in his old age and extremity,
Blind, at noonday exploring with his staff;

His eyes upturned as to the golden sun,
His eyeballs idly rolling. Little then
Did Galileo think whom he received;
That in his hand he held the hand of one
Who could requite him, — who would spread his name
O'er lands and seas, — great as himself, nay, greater.
Milton as little that in him he saw,
As in a glass, what he himself should be,
Destined so soon to fall on evil days
And evil tongues, — so soon, alas, to live
In darkness, and with dangers compassed round,
And solitude.

Samuel Rogers.

ODE TO THE WEST-WIND.

THIS poem was conceived and chiefly written in a wood that skirts the Arno, near Florence, and on a day when that tempestuous wind, whose temperature is at once mild and animating, was collecting the vapors which pour down the autumnal rains.

I.

O WILD West-Wind, thou breath of Autumn's being,
Thou, from whose unseen presence the leaves dead
Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing,

Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic red,
Pestilence-stricken multitudes: O thou,
Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed

The winged seeds, where they lie cold and low,
Each like a corpse within its grave, until
Thine azure sister of the spring shall blow

Her clarion o'er the dreaming earth, and fill
(Driving sweet buds like flocks to feed in air)
With living hues and odors plain and hill:

Wild Spirit, which art moving everywhere;
Destroyer and preserver; hear, O, hear!

II.

Thou on whose stream, mid the steep sky's commotion,
Loose clouds like earth's decaying leaves are shed,
Shook from the tangled boughs of heaven and ocean,

Angels of rain and lightning: there are spread
On the blue surface of thine airy surge,
Like the bright hair uplifted from the head

Of some fierce Mænad, even from the dim verge
Of the horizon to the zenith's height,
The locks of the approaching storm. Thou dirge

Of the dying year, to which this closing night
Will be the dome of a vast sepulchre,
Vaulted with all thy congregated might

Of vapors, from whose solid atmosphere
Black rain and fire and hail will burst: O, hear!

III.

Thou who didst waken from his summer dreams
The blue Mediterranean, where he lay,
Lulled by the coil of his crystalline streams,

Beside a pumice isle in Baiæ's bay,
And saw in sleep old palaces and towers
Quivering within the wave's intenser day,

All overgrown with azure moss and flowers
So sweet the sense faints picturing them! thou
For whose path the Atlantic's level powers

Cleave themselves into chasms, while far below
The sea-blooms and the oozy woods which wear
The sapless foliage of the ocean, know

Thy voice, and suddenly grow gray with fear,
And tremble and despoil themselves: O, hear!

IV.

If I were a dead leaf thou mightest bear;
If I were a swift cloud to fly with thee;
A wave to pant beneath thy power, and share

The impulse of thy strength, only less free
Than thou, O uncontrollable! if even
I were as in my boyhood, and could be

The comrade of thy wanderings over heaven,
As then, when to outstrip thy skyey speed
Scarce seemed a vision, I would ne'er have striven

As thus with thee in prayer in my sore need.
O, lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud!
I fall upon the thorns of life; I bleed!

A heavy weight of hours has chained and bowed
One too like thee; tameless and swift and proud.

V.

Make me thy lyre, even as the forest is:
What if my leaves are falling like its own!
The tumult of thy mighty harmonies

Will take from both a deep autumnal tone,
Sweet though in sadness. Be thou, spirit fierce,
My spirit! be thou me, impetuous one!

Drive my dead thoughts over the universe
Like withered leaves to quicken a new birth;
And, by the incantation of this verse,

Scatter, as from an unextinguished hearth
Ashes and sparks, my words among mankind!
Be through my lips to unawakened earth

The trumpet of a prophecy! O wind,
If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?

Percy Bysshe Shelley.

Fort Fuentes.

FORT FUENTES.

The ruins of Fort Fuentes form the crest of a rocky eminence that rises from the plain at the head of the Lake of Como, commanding views up the Valteline, and toward the town of Chiavenna. The prospect in

the latter direction is characterized by melancholy sublimity. . . . While descending, we discovered on the ground, apart from the path, and at a considerable distance from the ruined chapel, a statue of a child in pure white marble, uninjured by the explosion that had driven it so far down the hill.

DREAD hour! when, upheaved by war's sulphurous blast,
This sweet-visaged cherub of Parian stone
So far from the holy enclosure was cast,
To couch in this thicket of brambles alone, —

To rest where the lizard may bask in the palm
Of his half-open hand, pure from blemish or speck,
And the green, gilded snake, without troubling the calm
Of the beautiful countenance, twine round his neck;

Where haply, (kind service to piety due!)
When winter the grove of its mantle bereaves,
Some bird (like our own honored redbreast) may strew
The desolate slumberer with moss and with leaves:

Fuentes once harbored the good and the brave,
Nor to her was the dance of soft pleasure unknown;
Her banners for festal enjoyment did wave
While the thrill of her fifes through the mountains was blown:

Now gads the wild vine o'er the pathless ascent; —
O silence of Nature, how deep is thy sway,
When the whirlwind of human destruction is spent,
Our tumults appeased, and our strifes passed away!

William Wordsworth.

Frascati.

A ROOM IN THE VILLA TAVERNA.

THREE windows cheerfully poured in the light:
One from the east, where o'er the Sabine hills
The sun first rose on the great Roman plain,
And shining o'er the garden, with its fountains,
Vine-trellises, and heaps of rosy bloom,
Struck on the glittering laurel-trees, that shone
With burnished golden leaves against my lattice.
One towards the north, close-screened with a dark wall
Of bay and ilex, with tall cypress-shafts
Piercing with graceful spires the limpid air,
Like delicate shadows in transparent water.
One towards the west, — above a sunny green,
Where merry black-eyed Tusculan maidens laid
The tawny woof to bleach between the rays
Of morning light and the bright morning dew.
There spread the graceful balustrade, and down
Swept the twin flights of steps, with their stone vases,
And thick-leaved aloes, like a growth of bronze,
To the broad court, where from a twilight cell,
A Naiad, crowned with tufts of trembling green
Sang towards the sunny palace all day long.

Frances Anne Kemble.

CLOSE OF OUR SUMMER AT FRASCATI.

THE end is come: in thunder and wild rain
Autumn has stormed the golden house of Summer.
She, going, lingers yet, — sweet glances throwing
Of kind farewell upon the land she loves
And leaves. No more the sunny landscape glows
In the intense, uninterrupted light
And splendor of transparent, cloudless skies;
No more the yellow plain its tawny hue
Of sunburnt ripeness wears; even at noon
Thick watery veils fall on the mountain-ranges,
And the white sun-rays, with pale slanting brushes,
Paint rainbows on the leaden-colored storms.
Through milky, opal clouds the lightning plays,
Visible presence of that hidden power, —
Mysterious soul of the great universe,
Whose secret force runs in red human veins,
And in the glaring white veins of the tempest;
Uplifts the hollow earth, the shifting sea;
Makes stormy reformations in the sky,
Sweeping, with searching besoms of sharp winds,
The foul and stagnant chambers of the air,
Where the thick, heavy summer vapors slumber;
And, working in the sap of all still-growth,
In moonlight nights, unfolding leaves and blossoms, —
Of all created life the vital element
Appearing still in fire, — whether in the sea,
When its blue waves turn up great swathes of stars;

Or in the glittering, sparkling winter ice-world;
Or in the flickering white and crimson flames
That leap in the northern sky; or in the sparks
Of love or hate that flash in human eyes.
Lo, now, from day to day and hour to hour
Broad verdant shadows grow upon the land,
Cooling the burning landscape; while the clouds,
Disputing with the sun his heaven-dominion,
Checker the hillsides with fantastic shadows.
The glorious unity of light is gone,
The triumph of those bright and boundless skies;
Where, through all visible space, the eye met nothing
Save infinite brightness, — glory infinite.
No more at evening does the sun dissolve
Into a heaving sea of molten gold,
While over it a heaven of molten gold
Panted, with light and heat intensely glowing,
While to the middle height of the pure ether,
One deepening sapphire from the amber spreads.
Now trains of melancholy, gorgeous clouds,
Like mourners at an emperor's funeral,
Gather round the down-going of the sun;
Dark splendid curtains, with great golden fringes,
Shut up the day; masses of crimson glory,
Pale lakes of blue, studded with fiery islands,
Bright golden bars, cold peaks of slaty rock,
Mountains of fused amethyst and copper,
Fierce flaming eyes, with black o'erhanging brows,
Light floating curls of brown and golden hair,
And rosy flushes, like warm dreams of love,
Make rich and wonderful the dying day,

That, like a wounded dolphin, on the shore
Of night's black waves, dies in a thousand glories.
These are the very clouds that now put out
The serene beauty of the summer heavens.
The autumn sun hath virtue yet, to make
Right royal hangings for his sky-tent of them;
But, as the days wear on, and he grows faint
And pale and colorless, these are the clouds
That, like cold shrouds, shall muffle up the year,
Shut out the lovely blue, and draw round all —
Plain, hill, and sky — one still, chill wintry gray.

Frances Anne Kemble.

A VISIT TO TUSCULUM.

A SOLEMN thing it is, and full of awe,
Wandering long time among the lonely hills,
To issue on a sudden mid the wrecks
Of some fallen city, as might seem a coast
From which the tide of life has ebbed away,
Leaving bare sea-marks only. Such there lie
Among the Alban mountains, — Tusculum,
Or Palestrina with Cyclopean walls
Enormous: and this solemn awe we felt
And knew this morning, when we stood among
What of the first-named city yet survives.
For we had wandered long among those hills,
Watching the white goats on precipitous heights,
Half hid among the bushes, or their young
Tending new-yeaned: and we had paused to hear
The deep-toned music of the convent bells,

And wound through many a verdant forest-path,
Gathering the crocus and anemone,
With that fresh gladness which, when flowers are new
In the first spring, they bring us, till at last
We issued out upon an eminence,
Commanding prospect large on every side,
But largest where the world's great city lay,
Whose features, undistinguishable now,
Allowed no recognition, save where the eye
Could mark the white front of the Lateran
Facing this way, or rested on the dome,
The broad stupendous dome, high over all.
And as a sea around an island's roots
Spreads, so the level champaign every way
Stretched round the city, level all, and green
With the new vegetation of the spring;
Nor by the summer ardors scorched as yet,
Which shot from southern suns, too soon dry up
The beauty and the freshness of the plains;
While to the right the ridge of Apennine,
Its higher farther summits all snow-crowned,
Rose, with white clouds above them, as might seem
Another range of more aerial hills.

These things were at a distance, but more near
And at our feet signs of the tide of life,
That once was here, and now had ebbed away, —
Pavements entire, without one stone displaced,
Where yet there had not rolled a chariot-wheel
For many hundred years; rich cornices,
Elaborate friezes of rare workmanship,

And broken shafts of columns, that along
This highway-side lay prone; vaults that were rooms,
And hollowed from the turf, and cased in stone,
Seats and gradations of a theatre,
Which emptied of its population now
Shall never be refilled: and all these things,
Memorials of the busy life of man,
Or of his ample means for pomp and pride,
Scattered among the solitary hills,
And lying open to the sun and showers,
And only visited at intervals
By wandering herds, or pilgrims like ourselves
From distant lands; with now no signs of life,
Save where the goldfinch built his shallow nest
Mid the low bushes, or where timidly
The rapid lizard glanced between the stones, —
All saying that the fashion of this world
Passes away; that not philosophy
Nor eloquence can guard their dearest haunts
From the rude touch of desecrating time.
What marvel, when the very fanes of God,
The outward temples of the Holy One,
Claim no exemption from the general doom,
But lie in ruinous heaps; when nothing stands,
Nor may endure to the end, except alone
The spiritual temple built with living stones?

Richard Chenevix Trench.

Friuli, the Mountains.

FRIULI.

THE moon is up, and yet it is not night, —
Sunset divides the sky with her, — a sea
Of glory streams along the Alpine height
Of blue Friuli's mountains; Heaven is free
From clouds, but of all colors seems to be, —
Melted to one vast Iris of the West,
Where the Day joins the past Eternity;
While, on the other hand, meek Dian's crest
Floats through the azure air, — an island of the blest!

A single star is at her side, and reigns
With her o'er half the lovely heaven; but still
Yon sunny sea heaves brightly, and remains
Rolled o'er the peak of the far Rhætian hill,
As Day and Night contending were, until
Nature reclaimed her order; — gently flows
The deep-dyed Brenta, where their hues instil
The odorous purple of a new-born rose,
Which streams upon her stream, and glassed within it glows.

Filled with the face of heaven, which, from afar,
Comes down upon the waters; all its hues,
From the rich sunset to the rising star,
Their magical variety diffuse:

And now they change; a paler shadow strews
Its mantle o'er the mountains; parting day
Dies like the dolphin, whom each pang imbues
With a new color as it gasps away,
The last still loveliest, till 't is gone, — and all is gray.

Lord Byron.

Garda (Benacus), the Lake.

BENACUS.

HERE, vexed by winter storms Benacus raves,
Confused with working sands and rolling waves;
Rough and tumultuous like a sea it lies,
So loud the tempest roars, so high the billows rise.

Virgil. Tr. Joseph Addison.

VINO SANTO.

ONCE I read a strange, sweet story,
Of a sacred snowy wine,
Made by peasants on Lake Garda,
Brewed beneath the cross's sign;
Vino Santo called forever,
Sealed with seal of things divine, —
Vino Santo, Holy Wine!

On the first days of October,
Only in a shining sun,

Only in the dew of morning,
Clusters lifted one by one;
Thus begins the solemn vintage,
Vintage with the cross for sign, —
Vino Santo, Holy Wine!

Pales the autumn, falls the winter,
Lie the grapes untouched and still;
No man hastes and no man hinders
While their subtle juices fill,
Till the sacred day of Christmas,
Day of days, of joy divine,
Then is brewed the Holy Wine.

Past the winter, past the springtime,
Into summer far and late;
For the joy of Vino Santo
They who long must long and wait;
Only glowing heat can ripen —
Glowing heat and cross's sign,
Vino Santo, Holy Wine!

Dear, to-day, the strange, sweet story,
Sudden seemeth thine and mine;
Thine and mine and all true lovers,
Sealed by seal and signed by sign;
Silence, patience, from Love's Vintage
Drink at last, in joy divine,
Vino Santo, Holy Wine!

Helen Hunt.

Genoa.

APPROACH TO GENOA.

AT length the day departed, and the moon
Rose like another sun, illumining
Waters and woods and cloud-capt promontories,
Glades for a hermit's cell, a lady's bower,
Scenes of Elysium, such as Night alone
Reveals below, nor often, — scenes that fled
As at the waving of a wizard's wand,
And left behind them, as their parting gift,
A thousand nameless odors. All was still;
And now the nightingale her song poured forth
In such a torrent of heartfelt delight,
So fast it flowed, her tongue so voluble,
As if she thought her hearers would be gone
Ere half was told. 'T was where in the northwest,
Still unassailed and unassailable,
Thy pharos, Genoa, first displayed itself,
Burning in stillness on its craggy seat;
That guiding star so oft the only one,
When those now glowing in the azure vault
Are dark and silent. 'T was where o'er the sea
(For we were now within a cable's length)
Delicious gardens hung; green galleries,
And marble terraces in many a flight,
And fairy arches flung from cliff to cliff,
Wildering, enchanting; and, above them all,

A palace, such as somewhere in the East,
In Zenastan or Araby the blest,
Among its golden groves and fruits of gold,
And fountains scattering rainbows in the sky,
Rose, when Aladdin rubbed the wondrous lamp;
Such, if not fairer; and, when we shot by,
A scene of revelry, in long array,
As with the radiance of the setting sun,
The windows blazing. But we now approached
A city far-renowned; and wonder ceased.

Samuel Rogers.

ANDREA DORIA.

THIS house was Andrea Doria's. Here he lived;
And here at eve relaxing, when ashore,
Held many a pleasant, many a grave discourse
With them that sought him, walking to and fro
As on his deck. 'T is less in length and breadth
Than many a cabin in a ship of war;
But 't is of marble, and at once inspires
The reverence due to ancient dignity.

He left it for a better; and 't is now
A house of trade, the meanest merchandise
Cumbering its floors. Yet, fallen as it is,
'T is still the noblest dwelling, even in Genoa!
And hadst thou, Andrea, lived there to the last,
Thou hadst done well; for there is that without,
That in the wall, which monarchs could not give,
Nor thou take with thee, that which says aloud,
It was thy country's gift to her deliverer.

'T is in the heart of Genoa (he who comes
Must come on foot) and in a place of stir;
Men on their daily business, early and late,
Thronging thy very threshold. But, when there,
Thou wert among thy fellow-citizens,
Thy children, for they hailed thee as their sire:
And on a spot thou must have loved, for there,
Calling them round, thou gav'st them more than life,
Giving what, lost, makes life not worth the keeping.
There thou didst do, indeed, an act divine;
Nor couldst thou leave thy door or enter in,
Without a blessing on thee.
Thou art now
Again among them. Thy brave mariners,
They who had fought so often by thy side,
Staining the mountain-billows, bore thee back;
And thou art sleeping in thy funeral-chamber.
Thine was a glorious course; but couldst thou there
Clad in thy cere-cloth, — in that silent vault,
Where thou art gathered to thy ancestors, —
Open thy secret heart and tell us all,
Then should we hear thee with a sigh confess,
A sigh how heavy, that thy happiest hours
Were passed before these sacred walls were left,
Before the ocean-wave thy wealth reflected,
And pomp and power drew envy, stirring up
The ambitious man, that in a perilous hour
Fell from the plank.

Samuel Rogers.

GENOA.

AH! what avails it, Genoa, now to thee
That Doria, feared by monarchs, once was thine?
Unvied ruin! in thy sad decline
From virtuous greatness, what avails that he
Whose prow descended first the Hesperian sea,
And gave our world her mate beyond the brine,
Was nurtured, whilst an infant, at thy knee? —
All things must perish, — all but things divine.
Flowers, and the stars, and virtue, — these alone,
The self-subsisting shapes, or self-renewing,
Survive. All else are sentenced. Wisest were
That builder who should plan with strictest care
(Ere yet the wood was felled or hewn the stone)
The aspect only of his pile in ruin!

Aubrey de Vere.

IN GENOA.

NIGHT AT THE PARADISO.

HOW sweet the stars are, trembling in the sky,
As I look up across the shadowy trees,
Whose branches softly melt in heaven's seas,
And mix with stars as griefs with destinies.
How sweet they are that overhead do fly
And reel and burn like sweet dreams born divine
That high in heaven grow restless if too fine
For human uses. Sweet the sleepy air
That scarce can hold the moonlight in its arms,
For dreaming and for sleeping; sweet the stair

Of clouds that winds to God, upheld in palms
Of planets poised in the dark atmosphere;
Sweet all things here atwixt the seas and skies, —
Sights, sounds, and odors of this Paradise!

Cora Kennedy Aitkin.

GENOA.

GENTLY, as roses die, the day declines;
On the charmed air there is a hush the while;
And delicate are the twilight-tints that smile
Upon the summits of the Apennines.
The moon is up; and o'er the warm wave shines
A faery bridge of light, whose beams beguile
The fancy to some far and fortunate isle,
Which love in solitude unlonely shrines.
The blue night of Italian summer glooms
Around us; over the crystalline swell
I gaze on Genoa's spires and palace-domes:
City of cities, the superb, farewell!
The beautiful, in nature's bloom, is thine;
And Art hath made it deathless and divine!

William Gibson.

Ischia, the Island.

ISCHIA.

HERE in this narrow island glen
Between the dark hill and the sea,
Remote from books, remote from men,
I sit; but, O, how near to thee!

I bend above thy broidery frame;
I smell thy flowers; thy voice I hear:
Of Italy thou speak'st; that name
Woke long thy wish, — at last thy tear!

Hadst thou but watched that azure deep;
Those rocks with myrtles mantled o'er;
Misenum's cape, yon mountains' sweep;
The smile of that Circean shore!

But seen that crag's embattled crest,
Whereon Colonna mourned alone,
An eagle widowed in her nest, —
Heart strong and faithful to thine own!

This was not in thy fates. Thy life
Lay circled in a narrower bound:
Child, sister, tenderest mother, wife, —
Love made that circle holy ground.

Love blessed thy home, — its trees, its earth,
Its stones, — that ofttimes trodden road
Which linked the region of thy birth
With that till death thy still abode.

From the loud river's rocky beach
To that clear lake the woodlands shade,
Love stretched his arms. In sight of each
The place of thy repose is made.

Aubrey de Vere.

INARIMÉ.

VITTORIA COLONNA, after the death of her husband, the Marchese di Pescara, retired to her castle at Ischia (Inarimé), and there wrote the ode upon his death which gained her the title of Divine.

ONCE more, once more, Inarimé,
I see thy purple hills! — once more
I hear the billows of the bay
Wash the white pebbles on thy shore.

High o'er the sea-surge and the sands,
Like a great galleon wrecked and cast
Ashore by storms, thy castle stands,
A mouldering landmark of the Past.

Upon its terrace-walk I see
A phantom gliding to and fro;
It is Colonna, — it is she
Who lived and loved so long ago.

Pescara's beautiful young wife,
The type of perfect womanhood,
Whose life was love, the life of life,
That time and change and death withstood.

For death, that breaks the marriage band
In others, only closer pressed
The wedding-ring upon her hand
And closer locked and barred her breast.

She knew the life-long martyrdom,
The weariness, the endless pain
Of waiting for some one to come
Who nevermore would come again.

The shadows of the chestnut-trees,
The odor of the orange blooms,
The song of birds, and, more than these,
The silence of deserted rooms;

The respiration of the sea,
The soft caresses of the air,
All things in nature seemed to be
But ministers of her despair;

Till the o'erburdened heart, so long
Imprisoned in itself, found vent
And voice in one impassioned song
Of inconsolable lament.

Then as the sun, though hidden from sight,
Transmutes to gold the leaden mist,
Her life was interfused with light,
From realms that, though unseen, exist.

Inarimé! Inarimé!
Thy castle on the crags above
In dust shall crumble and decay,
But not the memory of her love.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

Isola Bella.

NAPOLEON AT ISOLA BELLA.

In the Isola Bella, upon the Lago Maggiore, where the richest vegetation of the tropics grows in the vicinity of the Alps, there is a lofty laurel-tree (the bay), tall as the tallest oak, on which, a few days before the battle of Marengo, Napoleon carved the word "Battaglia." The bark has fallen away from the inscription, most of the letters are gone, and the few left are nearly effaced.

O FAIRY island of a fairy sea,
Wherein Calypso might have spelled the Greek,
Or Flora piled her fragrant treasury,
Culled from each shore her zephyr's wings could seek, —
From rocks where aloes blow,

Tier upon tier, Hesperian fruits arise;
The hanging bowers of this soft Babylon;
An India mellows in the Lombard skies,
And changelings, stolen from the Lybian sun,
Smile to yon Alps of snow.

Amid this gentlest dreamland of the wave
Arrested, stood the wondrous Corsican;
As if one glimpse the better angel gave
Of the bright garden-life vouchsafed to man
Ere blood defiled the world.

He stood, — that grand Sesostris of the North, —
While paused the car to which were harnessed kings;

And in the airs, that lovingly sighed forth
The balms of Araby, his eagle-wings
Their sullen thunder furled

And o'er the marble hush of those large brows
Dread with the awe of the Olympian nod,
A giant laurel spread its breathless boughs,
The prophet-tree of the dark Pythian god,
Shadowing the doom of thrones!

What, in such hour of rest and scene of joy,
Stirs in the cells of that unfathomed brain?
Comes back one memory of the musing boy,
Lone gazing at the yet unmeasured main,
Whose waifs are human bones?

* * *

Write on the sacred bark such native prayer,
As the mild power may grant in coming years,
Some word to make thy memory gentle there;
More than renown, kind thought for men endears
A hero to mankind.

Slow moved the mighty hand, — a tremor shook
The leaves, and hoarse winds groaned along the wood;
The Pythian tree the damning sentence took,
And to the sun the battle-word of blood
Glared from the gashing rind.

So thou hast writ the word, and signed thy doom:
Farewell, and pass upon thy gory way.

The direful skein the pausing Fates resume!
Let not the Elysian grove thy steps delay
From thy Promethean goal.

The fatal tree the abhorrent word retained
Till the last battle on its bloody strand
Flung what were nobler had no life remained, —
The crownless front, and the disarméd hand,
And the foiled Titan soul;

Now, year by year, the warrior's iron mark
Crumbles away from the majestic tree,
The indignant life-sap ebbing from the bark
Where the grim death-word to humanity
Profaned the Lord of Day.

High o'er the pomp of blooms, as greenly still,
Aspires that tree, — the archetype of fame,
The stem rejects all chronicle of ill,
The bark shrinks back, — the tree survives the same,
The record rots away.

Lord Lytton.

Lastra.

LASTRA A SIGNA.

SHE is old! she is old, our Lastra!
Old with thousands of years;
Yet her bold, brave gates stand up to-day

As in years agone, when her Tuscan spears
From the sunny hill-top drove at bay
Foe after foe, in reddening lines,
Over the crest of the Apennines.

She is old! she is old, our Lastra!
Her noble walls are rent;
Yet they stand to-day on the great highway,
With the ruined battlement,
And the beacon tower, dark and gray:
She sees, like a dream, the Arno flow
By beautiful Florence, far below.

She is old! she is old, our Lastra!
Yet Ferruchio held her dear;
He gave her his heart, his sword, his life,
Yet she wasted never a tear,
With head unbowed in the bitter strife,
As on, through her gateway, the hosts of France
Passed at the traitor Baldini's glance.

They stormed at her walls, our Lastra!
They pierced her with fire and steel;
Orange came down from the hills of Spain, —
He trampled her turf with his iron heel,
Pillaged, and slew to her hurt and pain,
Till she fought no more; her banners were rent,
And the warder gone from her battlement.

But they left her the gray old mountains,
And the green of her olive-fields;

The blessed cross and the holy shrine,
And her marvellous carven shields,
Painted in colors rare and fine,
On the beautiful gateway, her crown and pride,
Dear to the hearts, where Amalfi died.

On the stones of her mighty watch-tower
Women spin in the sun;
Pilgrims tread on her broad highway;
Her days of battle are done.
Soft breezes blow o'er the scented hay,
And scarlet poppies bloom large and sweet,
By the blowing barley and fields of wheat.

She is older, our pride, our Lastra,
Than the tombs of Etruscan kings;
She is wise with the wisdom of sages, —
For her living she smiles and sings,
As she looks to the coming ages;
And her dead, they whisper, "Waste no tear,
We only sleep, — we are waiting here!"

Sarah D. Clarke.

La Verna (Alverna), the Mountain.

THE CONVENT.

THERE is a lofty spot
Visible amongst the mountains Apennine,
Where once a hermit dwelt, not yet forgot

He or his famous miracles divine;
And there the convent of Laverna stands
In solitude, built up by saintly hands,
And deemed a wonder in the elder time.
Chasms of the early world are yawning there,
And rocks are seen, craggy and vast and bare,
And many a dizzy precipice sublime,
And caverns dark as death, where the wild air
Rushes from all the quarters of the sky:
Above, in all his old regality,
The monarch eagle sits upon his throne,
Or floats upon the desert winds, alone.
There, belted round and round by forests drear,
Black pine, and giant beech, and oaks that rear
Their brown diminished heads like shrubs between,
And guarded by a river that is seen
Flashing and wandering through the dell below,
Laverna stands. It is a place of woe,
And midst its cold dim aisles and cells of gloom
The pale Franciscan meditates his doom;
An exile from his kind, save some sad few
(Like him imprisoned and devoted), who,
Deserting their high natures for the creed
A bigot fashioned in his weaker dreams,
Left love and life (yet love is life, indeed),
And all the wonders of the world, — its gleams
Of joy, of sunshine, fair as those which spring
From the great poet's high imagining,
Sounds, and gay sights, and woman's words which bless
And carry on their echoes happiness, —
Left all that man inherits, and fell down

To worship in the dust a demon's crown:
For there a phantom of a fearful size,
Shaped out of shadow and cloud, and nursed in pain,
And born of doubt and sorrow, and of the brain
The ever evil spirit mocks man's eyes;
And they who worship it are cold and wan,
Timid and proud, envying while they despise
The wealth and wishes of their fellow-man.

Bryan Waller Procter.

Lerici.

LINES WRITTEN NEAR SHELLEY'S HOUSE.

AND here he paced! These glimmering pathways strewn
With faded leaves his light, swift footsteps crushed;
The odor of yon pine was o'er him blown:
Music went by him in each wind that brushed
Those yielding stems of ilex! Here, alone,
He walked at noon, or silent stood and hushed
When the ground-ivy flashed the moonlight sheen
Back from the forest carpet always green.

Poised as on air the lithe elastic bower
Now bends, resilient now against the wind
Recoils, like Dryads that one moment cower
And rise the next with loose locks unconfined.
Through the dim roof like gems the sunbeams shower;
Old cypress-trunks the aspiring bay-trees bind,

And soon will have them wholly underneath:
Types eminent of glory conquering death.

Far down upon the shelves and sands below
The respirations of a southern sea
Beat with susurrent cadence, soft and slow:
Round the gray cave's fantastic imagery,
In undulation eddying to and fro,
The purple waves swell up or backward flee;
While, dewed at each rebound with gentlest shock,
The myrtle leans her green breast on the rock.

And here he stood; upon his face that light,
Streamed from some furthest realm of luminous thought,
Which clothed his fragile beauty with the might
Of suns forever rising! Here he caught
Visions divine. He saw in fiery flight
"The hound of Heaven," with heavenly vengeance fraught,
"Run down the slanted sunlight of the morn"—
Prometheus frown on Jove with scorn for scorn.

He saw white Arethusa, leap on leap,
Plunge from the Acroceraunian ledges bare
With all her torrent streams, while from the steep
Alpheus bounded on her unaware:
Hellas he saw, a giant fresh from sleep,
Break from the night of bondage and despair.
Who but had sung as there he stood and smiled,
"Justice and truth have found their winged child!"

Through cloud and wave and star his insight keen
Shone clear, and traced a god in each disguise,
Protean, boundless. Like the buskined scene
All nature rapt him into ecstasies:
In him, alas! had reverence equal been
With admiration, those resplendent eyes
Had wandered not through all her range sublime
To miss the one great marvel of all time.

The winds sang loud; from this Elysian nest
He rose, and trod yon spine of mountains bleak,
While stormy suns descending in the west
Stained as with blood yon promontory's beak.
That hour, responsive to his soul's unrest,
Carrara's marble summits, peak to peak,
Sent forth their thunders like the battle-cry
Of nations arming for the victory.

Aubrey de Vere.

AFTER A LECTURE ON SHELLEY.

ONE broad, white sail in Spezzia's treacherous bay;
On comes the blast; too daring bark, beware!
The cloud has clasped her; lo! it melts away;
The wide, waste waters, but no sail is there.

Morning: a woman looking on the sea;
Midnight: with lamps the long veranda burns;
Come, wandering sail, they watch, they burn for thee!
Suns come and go, alas! no bark returns.

And feet are thronging on the pebbly sands,
  And torches flaring in the weedy caves,
Where'er the waters lay with icy hands
  The shapes uplifted from their coral graves.

Vainly they seek; the idle quest is o'er;
  The coarse, dark women, with their hanging locks,
And lean, wild children gather from the shore
  To the black hovels bedded in the rocks.

But Love still prayed, with agonizing wail,
  "One, one last look, ye heaving waters, yield!"
Till Ocean, clashing in his jointed mail,
  Raised the pale burden on his level shield.

Slow from the shore the sullen waves retire;
  His form a nobler element shall claim;
Nature baptized him in ethereal fire,
  And Death shall crown him with a wreath of flame.

Fade, mortal semblance, never to return;
  Swift is the change within thy crimson shroud;
Seal the white ashes in the peaceful urn;
  All else has risen in yon silvery cloud.

Sleep where thy gentle Adonais lies,
  Whose open page lay on thy dying heart,
Both in the smile of those blue-vaulted skies,
  Earth's fairest dome of all divinest art.

Breathe for his wandering soul one passing sigh,
  O happier Christian, while thine eye grows dim, —
In all the mansions of the house on high,
  Say not that Mercy has not one for him!

Oliver Wendell Holmes.

Licenza.

THE SABINE FARM.

I OFTEN wished I had a farm,
A decent dwelling snug and warm,
A garden, and a spring as pure
As crystal running by my door,
Besides a little ancient grove,
Where at my leisure I might rove.
The gracious gods, to crown my bliss,
Have granted this, and more than this;
I have enough in my possessing;
'T is well: I ask no greater blessing,
O Hermes! than remote from strife
To have and hold them for my life.
If I was never known to raise
My fortune by dishonest ways,
Nor, like the spendthrifts of the times,
Shall ever sink it by my crimes:
If thus I neither pray nor ponder, —
O, might I have that angle yonder,
Which disproportions now my field,
What satisfaction it would yield!
O that some lucky chance but threw
A pot of silver in my view,
As lately to the man, who bought
The very land in which he wrought!
If I am pleased with my condition,

O, hear, and grant this last petition:
Indulgent, let my cattle batten,
Let all things, but my fancy, fatten,
And thou continue still to guard,
As thou art wont, thy suppliant bard.
Whenever, therefore, I retreat
From Rome into my Sabine seat,
By mountains fenced on either side,
And in my castle fortified,
What can I write with greater pleasure,
Than satires in familiar measure?
Nor mad ambition there destroys,
Nor sickly wind my health annoys;
Nor noxious autumn gives me pain,
The ruthless undertaker's gain.

* * *

Thus, in this giddy, busy maze
I lose the sunshine of my days,
And oft, with fervent wish repeat,
"When shall I see my sweet retreat?
O, when with books of sages deep,
Sequestered ease, and gentle sleep,
In sweet oblivion, blissful balm!
The busy cares of life becalm?
O, when shall I enrich my veins,
Spite of Pythagoras, with beans?
Or live luxurious in my cottage,
On bacon ham and savory pottage?
O joyous nights! delicious feasts!
At which the gods might be my guests."

My friends and I regaled, my slaves
Enjoy what their rich master leaves.
There every guest may drink and fill
As much or little as he will,
Exempted from the bedlam-rules
Of roaring prodigals and fools:
Whether, in merry mood or whim,
He fills his bumper to the brim,
Or, better pleased to let it pass,
Grows mellow with a moderate glass.
Nor this man's house, nor that's estate,
Becomes the subject of debate;
Nor whether Lepos, the buffoon,
Can dance, or not, a rigadoon;
But what concerns us more, I trow,
And were a scandal not to know:
Whether our bliss consist in store
Of riches, or in virtue's lore;
Whether esteem, or private ends,
Should guide us in the choice of friends;
Or what, if rightly understood,
Man's real bliss, and sovereign good.

* * *

Horace. Tr. Philip Francis.

FONS BANDUSIA.

BANDUSIAN fountain, crystal-bright,
With duly offered flowers and wine
To-morrow shall a kid be thine,
Whose front, with sprouting horns bedight,

Foretokens love and battle-shock:
Vain token; for thy chilling flood
Must take the crimson of his blood,
Young promise of the wanton flock.

In sultry dog-day's hottest noon,
Unsunned, a cool repose art thou
To oxen from the toilsome plough,
To wandering sheep a welcome boon.

Henceforth run on, patrician spring,
Made noble by my verse, that gave
To fame that ilex-sheltered cave
Whereon thy babbling waters ring.

Horace. Tr. R. M. Hovenden.

Liguria.

LIGURIA.

THE barren rocks themselves beneath my foot,
Relenting bloomed on the Ligurian shore.
Thick swarming people there, like emmets, seized
Amid surrounding cliffs, the scattered spots
Which Nature left in her destroying rage,
Made their own fields, nor sighed for other lands.
There, in white prospect from the rocky hill
Gradual descending to the sheltered shore,
By me proud Genoa's marble turrets rose.

And while my genuine spirit warmed her sons,
Beneath her Dorias, not unworthy, she
Vied for the trident of the narrow seas,
Ere Britain had yet opened all the main.

James Thomson.

Lombardy.

LOMBARDY.

BEYOND the rugged Apennines, that roll
Far through Italian bounds their wavy tops,
My path, too, I with public blessings strowed;
Free states and cities, where the Lombard plain,
In spite of culture negligent and gross,
From her deep bosom pours unbidden joys,
And green o'er all the land a garden spreads.

James Thomson.

Loretto.

THE "SANTA CASA" AT LORETTO.

A POET'S, not a pilgrim's, vow was mine;
And with unworthy eyes, though pleased, I scanned
That house walled round with sculptured forms divine,
Labor illustrious of a Tuscan hand:
If angels hither from earth's holiest strand

Wafted the hut those sumptuous walls enshrine,
Not less the artist here with potent wand
Wafts back the wanderer's soul to Palestine:
There lays, there lulls it in a peaceful haven,
O'er which, distinct as stars o'er sleeping seas,
All Christian truths and human, blended, bow,
Embodied in those gospel imageries.
Of song-raised temples we have heard ere now, —
Lo, here a visible hymn in marble graven!

Aubrey de Vere.

Lucca.

WRITTEN AT THE BATHS OF LUCCA.

THE fireflies, pulsing forth their rapid gleams,
Are the only light
That breaks the night;
A stream, that has the voice of many streams,
Is the only sound
All around:
And we have found our way to the rude stone,
Where many a twilight we have sat alone,
Though in this summer-darkness never yet;
We have had happy, happy moments here,
We have had thoughts we never can forget,
Which will go on with us beyond the bier.

The very lineaments of thy dear face
I do not see, but yet its influence

I feel, even as my outward sense perceives
The freshening presence of the chestnut leaves,
Whose vaguest forms my eye can only trace,
By following where the darkness seems most dense.
What light, what sight, what form, can be to us
Beautiful as this gloom?
We have come down, alive and conscious,
Into a blessèd tomb:
We have left the world behind us,
Her vexations cannot find us,
We are too far away;
There is something to gainsay
In the life of every day;
But in this delicious death
We let go our mortal breath,
Naught to feel and hear and see,
But our heart's felicity;
Naught with which to be at war,
Naught to fret our shame or pride,
Knowing only that we are,
Caring not what is beside.

Lord Houghton.

Mantua.

MANTUA.

ABOVE in beauteous Italy lies a lake
At the Alp's foot that shuts in Germany
Over Tyrol, and has the name Benaco.

By a thousand springs, I think, and more, is bathed,
'Twixt Garda and Val Camonica, Pennino,
With water that grows stagnant in that lake.
Midway a place is where the Trentine Pastor,
And he of Brescia, and the Veronese
Might give his blessing, if he passed that way.
Sitteth Peschiera, fortress fair and strong,
To front the Brescians and the Bergamasks,
Where round about the bank descendeth lowest.
There of necessity must fall whatever
In bosom of Benaco cannot stay,
And grows a river down through verdant pastures.
Soon as the water doth begin to run,
No more Benaco is it called, but Mincio,
Far as Governo, where it falls in Po.
Not far it runs before it finds a plain
In which it spreads itself, and makes it marshy,
And oft 't is wont in summer to be sickly.
Passing that way the virgin pitiless
Land in the middle of the fen descried,
Untilled and naked of inhabitants;
There to escape all human intercourse
She with her servants stayed, her arts to practise
And lived, and left her empty body there.
The men, thereafter, who were scattered round,
Collected in that place, which was made strong
By the lagoon it had on every side;
They built their city over those dead bones,
And, after her who first the place selected,
Mantua named it, without other omen.
Its people once within more crowded were,

Ere the stupidity of Casalodi
From Pinamonte had received deceit.
Therefore I caution thee, if e'er thou hearest
Originate my city otherwise,
No falsehood may the verity defraud.

Dante Alighieri. Tr. H. W. Longfellow.

THE APOTHECARY.

I DO remember an apothecary —
And hereabouts he dwells — whom late I noted
In tattered weeds, with overwhelming brows,
Culling of simples. Meagre were his looks;
Sharp misery had worn him to the bones;
And in his needy shop a tortoise hung,
An alligator stuff'd, and other skins
Of ill-shap'd fishes; and about his shelves
A beggarly account of empty boxes,
Green earthen pots, bladders, and musty seeds,
Remnants of packthread, and old cakes of roses,
Were thinly scatter'd to make up a show.
Noting this penury, to myself I said,
And if a man did need a poison now —
Whose sale is present death in Mantua —
Here lives a caitiff wretch would sell it him.
O, this same thought did but forerun my need;
And this same needy man must sell it me.
As I remember, this should be the house;
Being holiday, the beggar's shop is shut. —
What, ho! apothecary!

William Shakespeare.

ANDREW HOFER.

AT Mantua in chains
The gallant Hofer lay,
In Mantua to death
Led him the foe away;
His brothers' hearts bled for the chief,
For Germany disgrace and grief
And Tyrol's mountain-land!

His hands behind him clasped,
With firm and measured pace,
Marched Andrew Hofer on;
He feared not death to face,
Death whom from Iselberg aloft
Into the vale he sent so oft
In Tyrol's holy land.

But when from dungeon-grate,
In Mantua's stronghold,
Their hands on high he saw
His faithful brothers hold,.
"O God be with you all!" he said,
"And with the German realm betrayed,
And Tyrol's holy land!"

The drummer's hand refused
To beat the solemn march,
While Andrew Hofer passed
The portal's gloomy arch;
In fetters shackled, yet so free,

There on the bastion stood he,
Brave Tyrol's gallant son.

They bade him then kneel down,
He answered, "I will not!
Here standing will I die,
As I have stood and fought,
As now I tread this bulwark's bank,
Long life to my good Kaiser Frank,
And, Tyrol, hail to thee!"

A grenadier then took
The bandage from his hand,
While Hofer spake a prayer
His last on earthly land.
"Mark well!" he with loud voice exclaimed,
"Now fire! Ah! 't was badly aimed!
O Tyrol, fare thee well!"

Julius Mosen. Tr. Alfred Baskerville.

Maremma, The.

MAZENGHI.

THIS fragment refers to an event, told in Sismondi's Histoire des Républiques Italiennes, which occurred during the war when Florence finally subdued Pisa, and reduced it to a province. The opening stanzas are addressed to the conquering city.

O FOSTER-NURSE of man's abandoned glory
Since Athens, its great mother, sunk in splendor,
Thou shadowest forth that mighty shape in story,

As ocean its wrecked fanes, severe yet tender:
The light-invested angel Poesy
Was drawn from the dim world to welcome thee.

And thou in painting didst transcribe all taught
By loftiest meditations; marble knew
The sculptor's fearless soul, and, as he wrought,
The grace of his own power and freedom grew.
And (more than all) heroic, just, sublime
Thou wert among the false, — was this thy crime?

Yes; and on Pisa's marble walls the twine
Of direst weeds hangs garlanded, the snake
Inhabits its wrecked palaces; in thine
A beast of subtler venom now doth make
Its lair, and sits amid their glories overthrown,
And thus thy victim's fate is as thine own.

The sweetest flowers are ever frail and rare,
And love and freedom blossom but to wither;
And good and ill like vines entangled are,
So that their grapes may oft be plucked together;
Divide the vintage ere thou drink, then make
Thy heart rejoice for dead Mazenghi's sake.

No record of his crime remains in story,
But if the morning bright as evening shone,
It was some high and holy deed, by glory
Pursued into forgetfulness, which won
From the blind crowd he made secure and free
The patriot's meed, toil, death, and infamy.

For when by sound of trumpet was declared
A price upon his life, and there was set
A penalty of blood on all who shared
So much of water with him as might wet
His lips, which speech divided not, — he went
Alone, as you may guess, to banishment.

Amid the mountains, like a hunted beast,
He hid himself, and hunger, toil, and cold
Month after month endured; it was a feast
Whene'er he found those globes of deep red gold
Which in the woods the strawberry-tree doth bear,
Suspended in their emerald atmosphere.

And in the roofless huts of vast morasses,
Deserted by the fever-stricken serf,
All overgrown with reeds and long rank grasses,
And hillocks heaped of moss-inwoven turf,
And where the huge and speckled aloe made,
Rooted in stones, a broad and pointed shade,

He housed himself. There is a point of strand
Near Vada's tower and town; and on one side
The treacherous marsh divides it from the land,
Shadowed by pine and ilex forests wide;
And on the other creeps eternally,
Through muddy weeds, the shallow sullen sea.

Percy Bysshe Shelley.

THE MAREMMA.

THERE are bright scenes beneath Italian skies,
Where glowing suns their purest light diffuse,
Uncultured flowers in wild profusion rise,
And Nature lavishes her warmest hues;
But trust thou not her smile, her balmy breath, —
Away! her charms are but the pomp of death!

He in the vine-clad bowers, unseen, is dwelling,
Where the cool shade its freshness round thee throws;
His voice, in every perfumed zephyr swelling,
With gentlest whisper lures thee to repose;
And the soft sounds that through the foliage sigh
But woo thee still to slumber and to die.

Mysterious danger lurks, a siren there,
Not robed in terrors, or announced in gloom,
But stealing o'er thee in the scented air,
And veiled in flowers, that smile to deck thy tomb;
How may we deem, amidst their deep array,
That heaven and earth but flatter to betray?

Sunshine and bloom and verdure! Can it be
That these but charm us with destructive wiles?
Where shall we turn, O Nature, if in thee
Danger is masked in beauty, death in smiles?
O, still the Circe of that fatal shore,
Where she, the Sun's bright daughter, dwelt of yore!

There, year by year, that secret peril spreads,
Disguised in loveliness, its baleful reign,
And viewless blights o'er many a landscape sheds,
Gay with the riches of the south, in vain;
O'er fairy bowers and palaces of state
Passing unseen, to leave them desolate.

And pillared halls, whose airy colonnades
Were formed to echo music's choral tone,
Are silent now, amidst deserted shades,
Peopled by sculpture's graceful forms alone;
And fountains dash unheard, by lone alcoves,
Neglected temples, and forsaken groves.

And there, where marble nymphs, in beauty gleaming,
Midst the deep shades of plane and cypress rise
By wave or grot might Fancy linger, dreaming
Of old Arcadia's woodland deities.
Wild visions! — there no sylvan powers convene:
Death reigns the genius of the Elysian scene.

Felicia Hemans.

Mentana.

MENTANA.

LION-HEARTS of young Italy!
Field where none died in vain!
Beardless boys and famine-gaunt

Corpses along the plain, —
Did not enough of ye die
On the field where none died in vain,
Lion-hearts of young Italy!

Fields where death was victory,
Blood that gushed not in vain
When the deadly rifle of France
Crashed with its iron rain;
'Neath the pine-dotted slopes of Tivoli
The triumph is with the slain,
Lion-hearts of young Italy!

Noble error, if error,
To make their fatherland one! —
Through her five-and-twenty centuries
Rome counts no worthier son
Than he who led them to die
Where death and triumph were one, —
Lion-hearts of young Italy!

For the blood of Mentana
To the blood of Thermopylæ calls,
And the blood of Marathon answers,
Not in vain, not in vain he falls
Who stakes his life on the die
When the voice of freedom calls,
Lion-hearts of young Italy!

Passionate instinct for truth,
Children and heroes in one,

Reason higher than reason,
Light from beyond the sun;—
Did not enough of ye die
To knit your country in one,
Lion-hearts of young Italy?

Pity not them as they lie
Crowned with the fortunate dead,—
Pity not them, but the foe,
For the precious drops that they shed
Sow but the seed of victory!
Pity the foe, not the dead,
Lion-hearts of young Italy!

Yours to be gallant and true,
Yours for your country to die,
Yours to be men of Mentana,
Highly esteemed 'mong the high:
Theirs to look on at your victory!
For did not enough of ye die,
Lion-hearts of young Italy?

Brief the day of November,
Long to the remnant that fought;
Boys too young for the battle
Naked and hunger-distraught;
No, not too young to die,
Falling where each one fought,
Lion-hearts of young Italy!

Francis Turner Palgrave.

Messina.

MESSINA.

YES! pleased, on our land, from his azure way,
The Sun ever smiles with unclouded ray.
But never, fair isle, shall thy sons repose
Mid the sweets which the faithless waves enclose.
On their bosom they wafted the corsair bold
With his dreaded barks to our coast of old.
For thee was thy dower of beauty vain,
'T was the treasure that lured the spoiler's train.
O, ne'er from these smiling vales shall rise
A sword for our vanquished liberties;
'T is not where the laughing Ceres reigns,
And the jocund lord of the flowery plains:
Where the iron lies hid in the mountain cave
Is the cradle of Empire, — the home of the brave!

Friedrich Schiller. Tr. A. Lodge.

Milan.

MILAN.

MILAN with plenty and with wealth o'erflows,
And numerous streets and cleanly dwellings shows;
The people, blessed with nature's happy force,
Are eloquent and cheerful in discourse;

A circus and a theatre invites
The unruly mob to races and to fights.
Moneta consecrated buildings grace,
And the whole town redoubled walls embrace;
Here spacious baths and palaces are seen,
And intermingled temples rise between;
Here circling colonnades the ground enclose,
And here the marble statues breathe in rows:
Profusely graced the happy town appears,
Nor Rome itself her beauteous neighbor fears.

Ausonius. Tr. Joseph Addison.

SAINT AMBROSE.

YOUR Excellency is not pleased with me
Because of certain jests I made of late,
And, for my putting rogues in pillory,
Accuse me of being anti-German. Wait,
And hear a thing that happened recently
When wandering here and there one day as fate
Led me, by some odd accident I ran
On the old church St. Ambrose, at Milan.

My comrade of the moment was, by chance,
The young son of one Sandro, — one of those
Troublesome heads, — an author of romance, —
Promessi Sposi, — your Excellency knows
The book perhaps? — has given it a glance?
Ah, no? I see! God give your brain repose:
With graver interests occupied, your head
To all such stuff as literature is dead.

I enter, and the church is full of troops:
Of Northern soldiers, of Croatians, say,
And of Bohemians, standing there in groups
As stiff as dry poles stuck in vineyards, — nay,
As stiff as if impaled, and no one stoops
Out of the plumb of soldierly array;
All stand, with whiskers and mustache of tow,
Before their God like spindles in a row.

I started back: I cannot well deny
That being rained down, as it were, and thrust,
Into that herd of human cattle, I
Could not suppress a feeling of disgust
Unknown, I fancy, to your Excellency,
By reason of your office. Pardon! I must
Say the church stank of heated grease, and that
The very altar-candles seemed of fat.

But when the priest had risen to devote
The mystic wafer, from the band that stood
About the altar, came a sudden note
Of sweetness over my disdainful mood:
A voice that, speaking from the brazen throat
Of warlike trumpets, came like the subdued
Moan of a people bound in sore distress,
And thinking on lost hopes and happiness.

'T was Verdi's tender chorus rose aloof, —
That song the Lombards, there, dying with thirst,
Send up to God, — "Lord, from the native roof," —
O'er countless thrilling hearts the song has burst,

And here I, whom its magic put to proof,
Beginning to be no longer I, immersed
Myself amidst those tallowy fellow-men
As if they had been of my land and kin.

What would your Excellency? The piece was fine,
And ours, and played, too, as it should be played:
It drives old grudges out when such divine
Music as that mounts up into your head!
But when the piece was done, back to my line
I crept again, and there I should have stayed,
But that just then, to give me another turn,
From those mole-mouths a hymn began to yearn:

A German anthem, that to heaven went
On unseen wings, up from the holy fane:
It was a prayer, and seemed like a lament,
Of such a pensive, grave, pathetic strain
That in my soul it never shall be spent;
And how such heavenly harmony in the brain
Of those thick-skulled barbarians should dwell
I must confess it passes me to tell.

In that sad hymn I felt the bitter-sweet
Of the songs heard in childhood, which the soul
Learns from belovéd voices, to repeat
To its own anguish in the days of dole:
A thought of the dear mother, a regret,
A longing for repose and love, the whole
Anguish of distant exile seemed to run
Over my heart and leave it all undone:

When the strain ceased, it left me pondering
  Tenderer thoughts and stronger and more clear:
These men, I mused, the selfsame despot king,
  Who rules in Slavic and Italian fear,
Tears from their homes and arms that round them cling,
  And drives them slaves thence, to keep us slaves
    here:
From their familiar fields afar they pass
Like herds to winter in some strange morass.

To a hard life, to a hard discipline,
  Derided, solitary, dumb, they go:
Blind instruments of many-eyed Rapine
  And purposes they share not and scarce know;
And this fell hate that makes a gulf between
  The Lombard and the German aids the foe
Who tramples both divided, and whose bane
Is in the love and brotherhood of men.

Poor souls! far off from all that they hold dear,
  And in a land that hates them! Who shall say
That at the bottom of their hearts they bear
  Love for our tyrant? I should like to lay
They've our hate for him in their pockets! Here,
  But that I turned in haste and broke away,
I should have kissed a corporal stiff and tall,
And like a scarecrow stuck against the wall.

Giuseppe Giusti. Tr. W. D. Howells.

THE LAST SUPPER.

By Leonardo da Vinci, in the refectory of the Convent of Maria della Grazia, Milan.

THOUGH searching damps and many an envious flaw
Have marred this work, the calm, ethereal grace,
The love, deep-seated in the Saviour's face,
The mercy, goodness, have not failed to awe
The elements; as they do melt and thaw
The heart of the beholder, and erase
(At least for one rapt moment) every trace
Of disobedience to the primal law.
The annunciation of the dreadful truth
Made to the Twelve survives: lip, forehead, cheek,
And hand reposing on the board in ruth
Of what it utters, while the unguilty seek
Unquestionable meanings, still bespeak
A labor worthy of eternal youth!

William Wordsworth.

LEONARDO'S "LAST SUPPER" AT MILAN.

COME! if thy heart be pure, thy spirits calm.
If thou hast no harsh feelings, or but those
Which self-reproach inflicts, — ah no, bestows, —
Her wounds, here probed, find here their gentlest balm.
O the sweet sadness of that lifted palm!
The dreadful deed to come his lips disclose;
Yet love and awe, not wrath, that countenance shows,

As though they sang even now that ritual psalm
Which closed the feast piacular. Time hath done
His work on this fair picture; but that face
His outrage awes. Stranger! the mist of years
Between thee hung and half its heavenly grace,
Hangs there, a fitting veil; nor that alone, —
Gaze on it also through a veil of tears!

Aubrey de Vere.

THE CATHEDRAL OF MILAN.

WITH steps subdued, silence, and labor long,
I reached the marble roofs. Awe vanquished dread.
White were they as the summit of Mont Blanc,
When noontide parleys with that mountain's head.
The far-off Alps, by morning tinged with red,
Blushed through the spires that round in myriads sprung:
A silver gleam the wind-stirred poplars flung
O'er Lombardy's green sea below me spread.
Of these I little saw. In trance I stood;
Ere death, methought, admitted to the skies;
Around me, like a heavenly multitude
Crowning some specular mount of Paradise,
Thronged that angelic concourse robed in stone:
The sun, ascending, in their faces shone!

Aubrey de Vere.

MILAN CATHEDRAL.

NOT with such sweet emotion would it thrill
My heart, this delicate stone tracery,
From base to finial, climbing toward the sky,
While saint and angel countless niches fill,
If naught more holy than mere craftsman's skill
Had wrought this fine lace-like embroidery
Of marble; and with lavish industry
Tossed fruit and flower, at its fantastic will,
About, around, in fairy showers y-sprent; —
No; this profusion of ethereal beauty
Sprang from a softer influence than duty:
By reverent love the plan was fashioned;
By earnest love, the obedient chisel led,
Prankt it in tenderest embodiment.

John Bruce Norton.

MILAN CATHEDRAL.

O PEERLESS church of old Milan,
How brightly thou com'st back to me,
With all thy minarets and towers,
And sculptured marbles fair to see!

With all thy airy pinnacles
So white against the cloudless blue;
With all thy richly storied panes,
And mellowed sunlight streaming through.

O lovely church of loved Milan,
Can sadness with thy brightness blend?
Lo! moving down that high-arched aisle,
Those mourners for an absent friend.

In every hand a lighted torch,
Above the dead a sable pall,
On every face a look that tells,
She was the best beloved of all.

And low and faint the funeral chant
Subdued the pealing organ's tone,
As past the altars of her faith
They slow and silent bear her on.

O holy church of proud Milan,
A simpler tomb enshrines for me
The one I loved, who never stood
As now I stand to gaze on thee.

Yet all I see perchance she sees,
And chides not the unbidden tear,
That flows to think how vain the wish,
My life's companion, thou wert here!

O solemn church of gay Milan,
I owe that pensive hour to thee;
And oft may sacred sadness dwell
Within my soul to temper glee!

Those airy pinnacles that shine
So white against the dark blue sky,
Ascend from tranquil vaults where bones
Which wait the resurrection lie!

Henry Glassford Bell.

PADRE BANDELLI PROSES TO THE DUKE LUDOVICO SFORZA ABOUT LEONARDO DA VINCI.

TWO steps, your Highness, — let me go before,
And let some light down this dark corridor, —
Ser Leonardo keeps the only key
To the main entrance here so jealously,
That we must creep in at this secret door
If we his great Cenacolo would see.

The work shows talent, — that I must confess;
The heads, too, are expressive, every one;
But, with his idling and fastidiousness,
I fear his picture never will be done.

* * *

'T is twenty months since first upon the wall
This Leonardo smoothed his plaster, — then
He spent two months ere he began to scrawl
His figures, which were scarcely outlined, when
Some new fit seized him, and he spoilt them all.
As he began the first month that he came,
So he went on, month after month the same.
At times, when he had worked from morn to night
For weeks and weeks on some apostle's head,
In one hour, as it were from sudden spite,
He 'd wipe it out. When I remonstrated,
Saying, "Ser Leonardo, you erase
More than you leave, — that 's not the way to paint;
Before you finish we shall all be dead";
Smiling he turns (he has a pleasant face,

Though he would try the patience of a saint
With all his wilful ways), and calmly said,
"I wiped it out because it was not right;
I wish it had been, for your sake, no less
Than for this pious convent's; and indeed,
The simple truth, good Padre, to confess,
I 've not the least objection to succeed:
But I must please myself as well as you,
Since I must answer for the work I do."

There was St. John's head, *that* I verily thought
He 'd never finish. Twenty times at least
I thought it done, but still he wrought and wrought,
Defaced, remade, until at last he ceased
To work at all, — went off and locked the door, —
Was gone three days, — then came and sat before
The picture full an hour, — then calmly rose
And scratched out in a trice the mouth and nose.
This is sheer folly, as it seems to me,
Or worse than folly. Does your Highness pay
A certain sum to him for every day?
If so, the reason 's very clear to see.
No? Then his brain *is* touched, assuredly.

At last, however, as you see, 't is done, —
All but our Lord's head, and the Judas there.
A month ago he finished the St. John,
And has not touched it since, that I 'm aware;
And now he neither seems to think nor care
About the rest, but wanders up and down
The cloistered gallery in his long dark gown,

Picking the black stones out to step upon;
Or through the garden paces listlessly
With eyes fixed on the ground, hour after hour,
While now and then he stoops and picks a flower,
And smells it, as it were, abstractedly.
What he is doing is a plague to me!
Sometimes he stands before yon orange-pot,
His hands behind him just as if he saw
Some curious thing upon its leaves, and then,
With a quick glance, as if a sudden thought
Had struck his mind, there, standing on the spot,
He takes a little tablet out to draw,
Then, muttering to himself, walks on agen.
He is the very oddest man of men!

* * *

But, as I was observing, there have passed
Some twenty long and weary months since he
First turned us out of our refectory,
And who knows how much longer this may last?
Yet if our painter worked there steadily,
I could say nothing; but the work stands still,
While he goes idling round the cloisters' shade.
Pleasant enough for him, — but is he paid
For idle dreaming thoughts, or work and skill?

I crave your pardon; if I speak amiss,
Your Highness will, I hope, allowance make
That I have spoken for your Highness' sake,
And not that us it inconveniences,
Although it is a scandal to us all
To see this picture half done on the wall.

A word from your most gracious lips, I feel,
Would greatly quicken Ser Leonardo's zeal,
And we should soon see o'er our daily board,
The Judas finished, and our blessed Lord.

William Wetmore Story.

LEONARDO DA VINCI POETIZES TO THE DUKE IN HIS OWN DEFENCE.

PADRE BANDELLI, then, complains of me
Because, forsooth, I have not drawn a line
Upon the Saviour's head; perhaps, then, he
Could without trouble paint that head divine.
But think, O Signor Duca, what should be
The pure perfection of our Saviour's face, —
What sorrowing majesty, what noble grace,
At that dread moment when He brake the bread,
And those submissive words of pathos said,
"By one among you I shall be betrayed,"
And say if 't is an easy task to find,
Even among the best that walk this earth,
The fitting type of that divinest worth,
That has its image solely in the mind.
Vainly my pencil struggles to express
The sorrowing grandeur of such holiness.
In patient thought, in ever-seeking prayer,
I strive to shape that glorious face within,
But the soul's mirror, dulled and dimmed by sin,
Reflects not yet the perfect image there.
Can the hand do before the soul has wrought?
Is not our art the servant of our thought?

And Judas, too, — the basest face I see
Will not contain his utter infamy;
Among the dregs and offal of mankind,
Vainly I seek an utter wretch to find.
He who for thirty silver coins would sell
His Lord, must be the Devil's miracle.
Padre Bandelli thinks it easy is
To find the type of him who with a kiss
Betrayed his Lord. Well, what I can I 'll do;
And if it please his reverence and you,
For Judas' face I 'm willing to paint his.

* * *

The wilful work built by the conscious brain
Is but the humble handicraft of art:
It has its growth in toil, its birth in pain.
The Imagination, silent and apart
Above the Will, beyond the conscious eye,
Fashions in joyous ease and as in play
Its fine creations, — mixing up alway
The real and the ideal, heaven and earth,
Darkness and sunshine; and then, pushing forth
Sudden upon our world of consciousness
Its world of wonder, leaves to us the stress,
By patient art, to copy its pure grace,
And catch the perfect features of its face.

* * *

In facile natures fancies quickly grow,
But such quick fancies have but little root.
Soon the narcissus flowers and dies, but slow
The tree whose blossoms shall mature to fruit.
Grace is a moment's happy feeling, Power
A life's slow growth; and we for many an hour

Must strain and toil, and wait and weep, if we
The perfect fruit of all we are would see.

Therefore I wait. Within my earnest thought
For years upon this picture I have wrought,
Yet still it is not ripe; I dare not paint
Till all is ordered and matured within.
Hand-work and head-work have an earthly taint,
But when the soul commands I shall begin.

On themes like these I should not dare to dwell
With our good Prior, — they to him would be
Mere nonsense; he must touch and taste and see;
And facts, he says, are never mystical.
Now, the fact is, our worthy Prior says,
The convent is annoyed by my delays;
Nor can he see why I for hours and days
Should muse and dream and idle here around.
I have not made a face he has not found
Quite good enough before it was half done.
"Don't bother more," he says, "let it alone."
What can one say to such a connoisseur?
How could a Prior and a critic err?

But, not to be more tedious, I confess
I am disturbed to think I so distress
The worthy Prior. Yet 't were wholly vain
To him an artist's feelings to explain;
But, Signor Duca, you will understand,
And so I treat on higher themes with you.
The work you order I shall strive to do
With all my soul, not merely with my hand.

William Wetmore Story.

AMBROSE.

NEVER, surely, was holier man
Than Ambrose, since the world began:
With diet spare and raiment thin
He shielded himself from the father of sin;
With bed of iron and scourgings oft,
His heart to God's hand as wax made soft.

Through earnest prayer and watchings long
He sought to know 'tween right and wrong,
Much wrestling with the blessed Word
To make it yield the sense of the Lord,
That he might build a storm-proof creed
To fold the flock in at their need.

At last he builded a perfect faith,
Fenced round about with, "The Lord thus saith";
To himself he fitted the doorway's size,
Meted the light to the need of his eyes,
And knew, by a sure and inward sign,
That the work of his fingers was divine.

Then Ambrose said, "All those shall die
The eternal death who believe not as I";
And some were boiled, some burned in fire,
Some sawn in twain, that his heart's desire,
For the good of men's souls, might be satisfied
By the drawing of all to the righteous side.

One day, as Ambrose was seeking the truth
In his lonely walk, he saw a youth
Resting himself in the shade of a tree;
It had never been granted him to see
So shining a face, and the good man thought
'T were pity he should not believe as he ought.

So he set himself by the young man's side,
And the state of his soul with questions tried;
But the heart of the stranger was hardened indeed,
Nor received the stamp of the one true creed;
And the spirit of Ambrose waxed sore to find
Such face the porch of so narrow a mind.

"As each beholds in cloud and fire
The shape that answers his own desire,
So each," said the youth, "in the Law shall find
The figure and features of his mind;
And to each in his mercy hath God allowed
His several pillar of fire and cloud."

The soul of Ambrose burned with zeal
And holy wrath for the young man's weal:
"Believest thou then, most wretched youth,"
Cried he, "a dividual essence in Truth?
I fear me thy heart is too cramped with sin
To take the Lord and his glory in."

Now there bubbled beside them where they stood
A fountain of waters sweet and good;
The youth to the streamlet's brink drew near

Saying, "Ambrose, thou maker of creeds, look here!"
Six vases of crystal then he took,
And set them along the edge of the brook.

"As into these vessels the water I pour,
There shall one hold less, another more,
And the water unchanged, in every case,
Shall put on the figure of the vase;
O thou, who wouldst unity make through strife,
Canst thou fit this sign to the Water of Life?"

When Ambrose looked up, he stood alone,
The youth and the stream and the vases were gone;
But he knew, by a sense of humbled grace,
He had talked with an angel face to face,
And felt his heart change inwardly,
As he fell on his knees beneath the tree.

James Russell Lowell.

Mincio, the River.

THE MINCIO.

YE happy swans, who by the banks and streams
Of the blest Mincio have your lot assigned,
Tell me, if true, what by report we find,
That Virgil in your haunts felt day's first beam?
Tell, if with thee his high, poetic dream,
Fair Siren, hovered o'er his raptured mind;

So may thine ashes no disturbance find;
Rests he with thee entombed, of every age the theme?
What nobler grace from fortune could he have,
What end more suited to a dawn so fair,
What cradle more congenial to his grave,
Than to be born in your melodious air,
Ye snowy swans, and see the Sirens lave
The dust with tears which his loved relics bare?

Angelo di Costanzo. Tr. Capel Lofft.

Modena.

MODENA.

MODENA stands upon a spacious plain,
Hemmed in by ridges to the south and west,
And rugged fragments of the lofty chain
Of Apennine, whose elevated crest
Sees the last sunbeam in the western main,
Glittering and fading on its rippling breast;
And on the top with ice eternal crowned,
The sky seems bending in repose profound.

The flowery banks where beautifully flow
Panaro's limpid waters, eastward lie;
In front Bologna, on the left the Po,
Where Phaeton tumbled headlong from the sky;

North, Secchia's rapid stream is seen to go,
With changeful course in whirling eddies by,
Bursting the shores, and with unfruitful sand
Sowing the meadows and adjacent land.

Alessandro Tassoni. Tr. James Atkinson.

GINEVRA.

IF thou shouldst ever come by choice or chance
To Modena, where still religiously
Among her ancient trophies is preserved
Bologna's bucket (in its chain it hangs
Within that reverend tower, the Guirlandine),
Stop at a palace near the Reggio Gate,
Dwelt in of old by one of the Orsini.
Its noble gardens, terrace above terrace,
And rich in fountains, statues, cypresses,
Will long detain thee; through their arched walks,
Dim at noonday, discovering many a glimpse
Of knights and dames, such as in old romance,
And lovers, such as in heroic song,
Perhaps the two, for groves were their delight,
That in the spring-time, as alone they sat,
Venturing together on a tale of love,
Read only part that day. A summer sun
Sets ere one half is seen; but, ere thou go,
Enter the house, — prithee, forget it not, —
And look awhile upon a picture there.
'T is of a lady in her earliest youth,
The very last of that illustrious race,
Done by Zampieri, — but by whom I care not.

He who observes it, ere he passes on,
Gazes his fill, and comes and comes again,
That he may call it up, when far away.
She sits, inclining forward as to speak,
Her lips half open, and her finger up,
As though she said, "Beware!" Her vest of gold
'Broidered with flowers, and clasped from head to foot,
An emerald-stone in every golden clasp;
And on her brow, fairer than alabaster,
A coronet of pearls. But then her face,
So lovely, yet so arch, so full of mirth,
The overflowings of an innocent heart, —
It haunts me still, though many a year has fled,
Like some wild melody!
Alone it hangs
Over a mouldering heirloom, its companion,
An oaken chest, half eaten by the worm,
But richly carved by Antony of Trent
With Scripture stories from the life of Christ;
A chest that came from Venice, and had held
The ducal robes of some old ancestor.
That by the way, — it may be true or false, —
But don't forget the picture; and thou wilt not,
When thou hast heard the tale they told me there.
She was an only child; from infancy
The joy, the pride, of an indulgent sire.
Her mother dying of the gift she gave,
That precious gift, what else remained to him?
The young Ginevra was his all in life,
Still as she grew, forever in his sight;
And in her fifteenth year became a bride,

Marrying an only son, Francesco Doria,
Her playmate from her birth, and her first love.
Just as she looks there in her bridal dress,
She was all gentleness, all gayety,
Her pranks the favorite theme of every tongue.
But now the day was come, the day, the hour;
Now, frowning, smiling, for the hundredth time,
The nurse, that ancient lady, preached decorum;
And, in the lustre of her youth, she gave
Her hand, with her heart in it, to Francesco.
Great was the joy; but at the bridal feast,
When all sat down, the bride was wanting there.
Nor was she to be found! Her father cried,
"'T is but to make a trial of our love!"
And filled his glass to all; but his hand shook,
And soon from guest to guest the panic spread.
'T was but that instant she had left Francesco,
Laughing and looking back, and flying still,
Her ivory-tooth imprinted on his finger.
But now, alas! she was not to be found;
Nor from that hour could anything be guessed
But that she was not! Weary of his life,
Francesco flew to Venice, and forthwith
Flung it away in battle with the Turk.
Orsini lived; and long mightst thou have seen
An old man wandering as in quest of something,
Something he could not find, — he knew not what.
When he was gone, the house remained awhile
Silent and tenantless, — then went to strangers.
Full fifty years were past, and all forgot,
When on an idle day, a day of search

Mid the old lumber in the gallery,
That mouldering chest was noticed; and 't was said
By one as young, as thoughtless as Ginevra,
"Why not remove it from its lurking-place?"
'T was done as soon as said; but on the way
It burst, it fell; and lo, a skeleton,
With here and there a pearl, an emerald-stone,
A golden clasp, clasping a shred of gold!
All else had perished, — save a nuptial ring,
And a small seal, her mother's legacy,
Engraven with a name, the name of both,
"Ginevra." There then had she found a grave!
Within that chest had she concealed herself,
Fluttering with joy the happiest of the happy;
When a spring-lock that lay in ambush there,
Fastened her down forever!

Samuel Rogers.

THE SLEEPING FIGURE.

UPON a couch of silk and gold
A pale enchanted lady lies,
And o'er her many a frowning fold
Of crimson shades her closed eyes;
And shadowy creatures round her rise,
And ghosts of women masqued in woe,
And many a phantom pleasure flies,
And lovers slain — ah, long ago!

The lady, pale as now she sleeps,
An age upon that couch hath lain,

Yet in one spot a spirit keeps
His mansion, like a red-rose stain;
And, when lovers' ghosts complain,
Blushes like a new-born flower,
Or as some bright dream of pain
Dawneth through the darkest hour.

Once, — but many a thought hath fled
Since the time whereof I speak, —
Once, the sleeping lady bred
Beauty in her burning cheek,
And the lovely morn did break
Through the azure of her eyes,
And her heart was warm and meek,
And her hope was in the skies.

But the lady loved at last,
And the passion pained her soul,
And her hope away was cast
Far beyond her own control;
And the clouded thoughts that roll
Through the midnight of the mind
O'er her eyes of azure stole,
Till they grew deject and blind.

He to whom her heart was given,
When May-music was in tune,
Dared forsake that amorous heaven,
Changed and careless soon! —
O, what is all beneath the moon
When his heart will answer not!
What are all the dreams of noon
With our love forgot!

Heedless of the world she went,
Sorrow's daughter, meek and lone,
Till some spirit downwards bent
And struck her to this sleep of stone.
Look! Did old Pygmalion
Sculpture thus, or more prevail,
When he drew the living tone
From the marble pale?

Bryan Waller Procter.

Mola di Gaeta.

THE FOUNTAIN.

It was a well
Of whitest marble, white as from the quarry;
And richly wrought with many a high relief,
Greek sculpture, — in some earlier day perhaps
A tomb, and honored with a hero's ashes.
The water from the rock filled, overflowed it;
Then dashed away, playing the prodigal,
And soon was lost, — stealing, unseen, unheard,
Through the long grass, and round the twisted roots
Of aged trees, — discovering where it ran
By the fresh verdure. Overcome with heat,
I threw me down, admiring, as I lay,
That shady nook, a singing-place for birds,
That grove so intricate, so full of flowers,
More than enough to please a maid a-Maying.

The sun was down, a distant convent-bell
Ringing the Angelus; and now approached
The hour for stir and village gossip there,
The hour Rebekah came, when from the well
She drew with such alacrity to serve
The stranger and his camels. Soon I heard
Footsteps; and, lo, descending by a path
Trodden for ages, many a nymph appeared,
Appeared and vanished, bearing on her head
Her earthen pitcher. It called up the day
Ulysses landed there; and long I gazed,
Like one awaking in a distant time.
At length there came the loveliest of them all,
Her little brother dancing down before her;
And ever as he spoke, which he did ever,
Turning and looking up in warmth of heart
And brotherly affection. Stopping there,
She joined her rosy hands, and, filling them
With the pure element, gave him to drink;
And, while he quenched his thirst, standing on tiptoe,
Looked down upon him with a sister's smile,
Nor stirred till he had done, — fixed as a statue.

Then hadst thou seen them as they stood, Canova,
Thou hadst endowed them with eternal youth;
And they had evermore lived undivided,
Winning all hearts, — of all thy works the fairest!

Samuel Rogers.

LINES

WRITTEN AT MOLA DI GAETA, NEAR THE RUINS OF CICERO'S FORMIAN VILLA.

WE wandered through bright climes, and drank the beams
Of southern suns: Elysian scenes we viewed,
Such as we picture oft in those day-dreams
That haunt the fancy in her wildest mood.
Upon the sea-beat vestiges we stood,
Where Cicero dwelt, and watched the latest gleams
Of rosy light steal o'er the azure flood;
And memory conjured up most glowing themes,
Filling the expanded heart, till it forgot
Its own peculiar grief! O, if the dead
Yet haunt our earth, around this hallowed spot,
Hovers sweet Tully's spirit, since it fled
The Roman Forum, — Forum now no more!
Though cold and silent be the sands we tread,
Still burns the "eloquent air," and to the shore
There rolls no wave, and through the orange shade
There sighs no breath, which doth not speak of him,
The "Father of his Country": and though dim
Her day of empire, and her laurel crown
Torn and defaced, and soiled with blood and tears,
And her imperial eagles trampled down,
Still with a queenlike grace, Italia wears
Her garland of bright names, — her coronal of stars,
(Radiant memorials of departed worth!)
That shed a glory round her pensive brow,
And make her still the worship of the earth.

Anna Jameson.

Monaco.

MONACO.

THE winding rocks a spacious harbor frame,
That from the great Alcides takes its name:
Fenced to the west, and to the north it lies;
But when the winds in southern quarters rise,
Ships, from their anchors torn, become their sport,
And sudden tempests rage within the port.

Lucan. Tr. Joseph Addison.

Monte Cassino.

MONTE CASSINO.

"WHAT hangs behind that curtain?" "Wouldst thou learn?
If thou art wise, thou wouldst not. 'T is by some
Believed to be his master-work who looked
Beyond the grave, and on the chapel wall,
As though the day were come, were come and past,
Drew the Last Judgment. But the wisest err.
He who in secret wrought, and gave it life, —
For life is surely there and visible change, —
Life such as none could of himself impart
(They who behold it go not as they came,

But meditate for many and many a day), —
Sleeps in the vault beneath. We know not much;
But what we know we will communicate.
'T is in an ancient record of the house;
And may it make thee tremble, lest thou fall!

"Once, — on a Christmas eve, — ere yet the roof
Rung with the hymn of the Nativity,
There came a stranger to the convent gate,
And asked admittance; ever and anon,
As if he sought what most he feared to find,
Looking behind him. When within the walls,
These walls so sacred and inviolate,
Still did he look behind him; oft and long,
With curling, quivering lip and haggard eye,
Catching at vacancy. Between the fits —
For here, 't is said, he lingered while he lived —
He would discourse and with a mastery,
A charm by none resisted, none explained,
Unfelt before; but when his cheek grew pale
(Nor was the respite longer, if so long,
Than while a shepherd in the vale below
Counts, as he folds, five hundred of his flock)
All was forgotten. Then, howe'er employed,
He would break off, and start as if he caught
A glimpse of something that would not be gone,
And turn and gaze and shrink into himself,
As though the fiend were there, and, face to face,
Scowled o'er his shoulder.

Most devout he was,
Most unremitting in the services, —
Then, only then, untroubled, unassailed, —

And, to beguile a melancholy hour,
Would sometimes exercise that noble art
He learnt in Florence; with a master's hand,
As to this day the Sacristy attests,
Painting the wonders of the Apocalypse.
"At length he sunk to rest, and in his cell
Left, when he went, a work in secret done, —
The portrait (for a portrait it must be)
That hangs behind the curtain. Whence he drew,
None here can doubt; for they that come to catch
The faintest glimpse — to catch it and be gone —
Gaze as he gazed, then shrink into themselves,
Acting the selfsame part. But why 't was drawn, —
Whether, in penance, to atone for guilt,
Or to record the anguish guilt inflicts,
Or haply to familiarize his mind
With what he could not fly from, — none can say,
For none could learn the burden of his soul."

Samuel Rogers.

MONTE CASSINO.

BEAUTIFUL valley! through whose verdant meads
Unheard the Garigliano glides along;—
The Liris, nurse of rushes and of reeds,
The river taciturn of classic song.

The Land of Labor and the Land of Rest,
Where mediæval towns are white on all
The hillsides, and where every mountain's crest
Is an Etrurian or a Roman wall.

There is Alagna, where Pope Boniface
Was dragged with contumely from his throne;
Sciarra Colonna, was that day's disgrace
The Pontiff's only, or in part thine own?

There is Ceprano, where a renegade
Was each Apulian, as great Dante saith,
When Manfred by his men-at-arms betrayed
Spurred on to Benevento and to death.

There is Aquinum, the old Volscian town,
Where Juvenal was born, whose lurid light
Still hovers o'er his birthplace like the crown
Of splendor seen o'er cities in the night.

Doubled the splendor is, that in its streets
The Angelic Doctor as a school-boy played,
And dreamed perhaps the dreams, that he repeats
In ponderous folios for scholastics made.

And there, uplifted, like a passing cloud
That pauses on a mountain summit high,
Monte Cassino's convent rears its proud
And venerable walls against the sky.

Well I remember how on foot I climbed
The stony pathway leading to its gate;
Above, the convent bells for vespers chimed,
Below, the darkening town grew desolate.

Well I remember the low arch and dark,
The courtyard with its well, the terrace wide,

From which far down the valley, like a park
Veiled in the evening mists, was dim descried.

The day was dying, and with feeble hands
Caressed the mountain-tops; the vales between
Darkened; the river in the meadow-lands
Sheathed itself as a sword, and was not seen.

The silence of the place was like a sleep,
So full of rest it seemed; each passing tread
Was a reverberation from the deep
Recesses of the ages that are dead.

For, more than thirteen centuries ago,
Benedict fleeing from the gates of Rome,
A youth disgusted with its vice and woe,
Sought in these mountain solitudes a home.

He founded here his Convent and his Rule
Of prayer and work, and counted work as prayer;
The pen became a clarion, and his school
Flamed like a beacon in the midnight air.

What though Boccaccio, in his reckless way,
Mocking the lazy brotherhood, deplores
The illuminated manuscripts, that lay
Torn and neglected on the dusty floors?

Boccaccio was a novelist, a child
Of fancy and of fiction at the best!
This the urbane librarian said, and smiled
Incredulous, as at some idle jest.

Upon such themes as these, with one young friar
I sat conversing late into the night,
Till in its cavernous chimney the wood-fire
Had burnt its heart out like an anchorite.

And then translated, in my convent cell,
Myself yet not myself, in dreams I lay;
And, as a monk who hears the matin bell,
Started from sleep; already it was day.

From the high window I beheld the scene
On which Saint Benedict so oft had gazed, —
The mountains and the valley in the sheen
Of the bright sun, — and stood as one amazed.

Gray mists were rolling, rising, vanishing;
The woodlands glistened with their jewelled crowns;
Far off the mellow bells began to ring
For matins in the half-awakened towns.

The conflict of the Present and the Past,
The ideal and the actual in our life,
As on a field of battle held me fast,
While this world and the next world were at strife.

For, as the valley from its sleep awoke,
I saw the iron horses of the steam
Toss to the morning air their plumes of smoke,
And woke, as one awaketh from a dream.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

Monte Circello.

CIRCELLO.

THEY skirt the nearest shores to Circe's land,
Where she, the sumptuous daughter of the Sun,
Fills her secluded forests with the sounds
Of her assiduous singing, while within
Her palace proud the fragrant cedar burns,
Her nightly torch; and through her gauzy web
The whistling shuttle runs. Here, late at night,
The roar of angry lions in the dark
Chafing against their prison bars, was heard;
And bristly boars and raging bears, pent up,
And howling wolves of size immense. All these,
From human shapes, by means of potent herbs,
The cruel goddess Circe had transformed
To faces and to bodies of wild beasts.
Then, lest the pious Trojans should endure
Such monstrous fate, when brought into the port,
Nor touch a coast so dreadful, Neptune filled
Their sails with favoring winds, to aid their flight,
And wafted them beyond the boiling shoals.

Virgil. Tr. C. P. Cranch.

MONTE CIRCELLO.

WHAT time,
In hours of summer, sad with so much light,
The sun beats ceaselessly upon the fields,

The harvesters, as famine urges them,
Draw hitherward in thousands, and they wear
The look of those that dolorously go
In exile, and already their brown eyes
Are heavy with the poison of the air.
Here never note of amorous bird consoles
Their drooping hearts; here never the gay songs
Of their Abruzzi sound to gladden these
Pathetic bands. But taciturn they toil,
Reaping the harvests for their unknown lords;
And when the weary labor is performed,
Taciturn they retire; and not till then
Their bagpipes crown the joys of the return,
Swelling the heart with their familiar strain.
Alas! not all return, for there is one
That dying in the furrow sits, and seeks
With his last look some faithful kinsman out,
To give his life's wage, that he carry it
Unto his trembling mother, with the last
Words of her son that comes no more. And dying,
Deserted and alone, far off he hears
His comrades going, with their pipes in time
Joyfully measuring their homeward steps.
And when in after years an orphan comes
To reap the harvest here, and feels his blade
Go quivering through the swaths of falling grain,
He weeps and thinks: haply these heavy stalks
Ripened on his unburied father's bones.

Aleardo Aleardi. Tr. W. D. Howells.

Monte Gargano.

MONTE GARGANO.

WHERE, through Gargano's woody dells,
O'er bending oaks the north-wind swells,
A sainted hermit's lowly tomb
Is bosomed in umbrageous gloom,
In shades that saw him live and die
Beneath their waving canopy.
'T was his, as legends tell, to share
The converse of immortals there;
Around that dweller of the wild
There "bright appearances" have smiled,
And angel wings at eve have been
Gleaming the shadowy boughs between.
And oft from that secluded bower
Hath breathed, at midnight's calmer hour,
A swell of viewless harps, a sound
Of warbled anthems pealing round.
O, none but voices of the sky
Might wake that thrilling harmony,
Whose tones, whose very echoes, made
An Eden of the lonely shade!
Years have gone by; the hermit sleeps
Amidst Gargano's woods and steeps;
Ivy and flowers have half o'ergrown
And veiled his low sepulchral stone:
Yet still the spot is holy, still

Celestial footsteps haunt the hill;
And oft the awe-struck mountaineer
Aerial vesper-hymns may hear
Around those forest-precincts float,
Soft, solemn, clear, but still remote.
Oft will Affliction breathe her plaint
To that rude shrine's departed saint,
And deem that spirits of the blest
There shed sweet influence o'er her breast.

Felicia Hemans.

Montepulciano.

MONTEPULCIANO WINE.

HEARKEN, all earth!
We, Bacchus, in the might of our great mirth,
To all who reverence us, and are right thinkers; —
Hear, all ye drinkers!
Give ear, and give faith, to our edict divine, —
Moltepulciano's the King of all Wine!

At these glad sounds,
The Nymphs, in giddy rounds,
Shaking their ivy diadems and grapes,
Echoed the triumph in a thousand shapes.
The Satyrs would have joined them; but alas!
They could n't; for they lay about the grass,
As drunk as apes.

Francesco Redi. Tr. Leigh Hunt.

Naples.

NAPLES.

FAIR stand the peopled towns: by Phœbus' fane
Auspicious graced, walls rose beside the main:
Puteoli spreads smooth its haven's sand,
And shores, the shelter of the world, expand.
Here Capua's streets with Rome imperial vie,
Where Capys fixed his Trojan colony:
Near lies the native city of my love;
The mild soil Phœbus, by the guiding dove,
Showed to Parthenope; the siren maid
Crossed the wide seas, and here her Naples laid.
Hither I seek to bear thee: not my race
Springs from wild Lybia, nor from barbarous Thrace.
Tempered by breezy summers, winters bland,
The waveless seas glide slumbering to the land:
Safe peace is here; life's careless ease is ours;
Unbroken rest, and sleep till morning hours.
No courts here rage; no bickering brawls are known:
The laws of men are in their manners shown;
And Justice walks unguarded and alone.

* * *

Nor less the various charms of life are found
Where the wide champaign spreads its distant bound:
Whether thou haunt warm Baiæ's streaming shore,
Or the prophetic sibyl's cave explore;
Or mount, made famous by Misenus' oar;

Or Gaurus' vineyards, or the Caprean isle,
Where sailors mark the watch-tower's moony pile;
Surrentum's hills, where acrid clusters twine,
And where my Pollius dwells, and tends the vine:
Ænaria's healing lakes; and from the main
The rocks of Statina emerged again.
A thousand pleasures could my verse expand,
And darling loves of this my native land.

Statius. Tr. C. A. Elton.

ODE TO NAPLES.

I.

I STOOD within the city disinterred,
And heard the autumnal leaves like light footfalls
Of spirits passing through the streets, and heard
The Mountain's slumberous voice at intervals
Thrill through those roofless halls:
The oracular thunder penetrating shook
The listening soul in my suspended blood;
I felt that Earth out of her deep heart spoke, —
I felt, but heard not. Through white columns glowed
The isle-sustaining Ocean flood,
A plane of light between two heavens of azure;
Around me gleamed many a bright sepulchre
Of whose pure beauty, Time, as if his pleasure
Were to spare Death, had never made erasure;
But every living lineament was clear
As in the sculptor's thought; and there
The wreaths of stony myrtle, ivy and pine,
Like winter leaves o'ergrown by moulded snow,

Seemed only not to move and grow
Because the crystal silence of the air
Weighed on their life; even as the power divine,
Which then lulled all things, brooded upon mine.

II.

Then gentle winds arose,
With many a mingled close
Of wild Æolian sound and mountain odor keen;
And where the Baian ocean
Welters with air-like motion,
Within, above, around its bowers of starry green,
Moving the sea-flowers in those purple caves,
Even as the ever-stormless atmosphere
Floats o'er the Elysian realm,
It bore me; like an angel, o'er the waves
Of sunlight, whose swift pinnace of dewy air
No storm can overwhelm.
I sailed where ever flows
Under the calm Serene
A spirit of deep emotion,
From the unknown graves
Of the dead kings of melody.
Shadowy Aornus darkened o'er the helm
The horizontal ether; heaven stript bare
Its depths over Elysium, where the prow
Made the invisible water white as snow;
From that Typhæan mount, Inarimé,
There streamed a sunlit vapor, like the standard
Of some ethereal host;
Whilst from all the coast,

Louder and louder, gathering round, there wandered
Over the oracular woods and divine sea
Prophesyings which grew articulate.
They seize me, — I must speak them; — be they fate!

III.

Naples, thou Heart of men, which ever pantest
Naked, beneath the lidless eye of heaven!
Elysian City, which to calm enchantest
The mutinous air and sea! they round thee, even
As sleep round Love, are driven, —
Metropolis of a ruined Paradise
Long lost, late won, and yet but half regained!
Bright Altar of the bloodless sacrifice,
Which armèd Victory offers up unstained
To Love, the flower-enchained!
Thou which wert once, and then didst cease to be,
Now art, and henceforth ever shalt be, free,
If hope, and truth, and justice can avail.
Hail, hail, all hail!

* * *

IV.

Great Spirit, deepest Love!
Which rulest and dost move
All things which live and are, within the Italian shore;
Who spreadest heaven around it,
Whose woods, rocks, waves, surround it;
Who sittest in thy star, o'er Ocean's western floor;
Spirit of beauty! at whose soft command
The sunbeams and the showers distil its foison

From the Earth's bosom chill;
O, bid those beams be each a blinding brand
Of lightning! bid those showers be dews of poison!
Bid the Earth's plenty kill!
Bid thy bright Heaven above,
Whilst light and darkness bound it,
Be their tomb who planned
To make it ours and thine!
Or, with thine harmonizing ardors fill
And raise thy sons, as o'er the prone horizon
Thy lamp feeds every twilight wave with fire!
Be man's high hope and unextinct desire
The instrument to work thy will divine!
Then clouds from sunbeams, antelopes from leopards,
And frowns and fears from thee,
Would not more swiftly flee,
Than Celtic wolves from the Ausonian shepherds.
Whatever, Spirit, from thy starry shrine
Thou yieldest or withholdest, O, let be
This city of thy worship, ever free!

Percy Bysshe Shelley.

STANZAS

WRITTEN IN DEJECTION NEAR NAPLES.

THE sun is warm, the sky is clear,
The waves are dancing fast and bright,
Blue isles and snowy mountains wear
The purple noon's transparent might;
The breath of the moist earth is light,

Around its unexpanded buds;
Like many a voice of one delight,
The winds, the birds, the ocean floods,
The city's voice itself is soft like solitude's.

I see the deep's untrampled floor
With green and purple sea-weeds strown;
I see the waves upon the shore,
Like light dissolved in star-showers, thrown;
I sit upon the sands alone,
The lightning of the noontide ocean
Is flashing round me, and a tone
Arises from its measured motion,
How sweet! did any heart now share in my emotion.

Alas! I have nor hope nor health,
Nor peace within nor calm around,
Nor that content surpassing wealth,
The sage in meditation found,
And walked with inward glory crowned, —
Nor fame, nor power, nor love, nor leisure.
Others I see whom these surround;
Smiling they live, and call life pleasure;
To me that cup has been dealt in another measure.

Yet now despair itself is mild,
Even as the winds and waters are;
I could lie down like a tired child,
And weep away the life of care
Which I have borne, and yet must bear,
Till death like sleep might steal on me,
And I might feel in the warm air

My cheek grow cold, and hear the sea
Breathe o'er my dying brain its last monotony.

Some might lament that I were cold,
As I when this sweet day is gone,
Which my lost heart, too soon grown old,
Insults with this untimely moan;
They might lament, — for I am one
Whom men love not, — and yet regret,
Unlike this day, which, when the sun
Shall on its stainless glory set,
Will linger, though enjoyed, like joy in memory yet.

Percy Bysshe Shelley.

VIRGIL'S TOMB.

I CAME, great bard, to gaze upon thy shrine,
And o'er thy relics wait the inspiring Nine:
For sure, I said, where Maro's ashes sleep,
The weeping Muses must their vigils keep:
Still o'er their favorite's monument they mourn,
And with poetic trophies grace his urn:
Have placed the shield and martial trumpet here;
The shepherd's pipe, and rural honors there:
Fancy had decked the consecrated ground,
And scattered never-fading roses round.
And now my bold romantic thought aspires
To hear the echo of celestial lyres;
Then catch some sound to bear delighted home,
And boast I learnt the verse at Virgil's tomb;
Or stretched beneath thy myrtle's fragrant shade,

With dreams ecstatic hovering o'er my head,
See forms august, and laurelled ghosts ascend,
And with thyself, perhaps, the long procession end.
I came, — but soon the phantoms disappeared;
Far other scenes than wanton Hope had reared;
No faery rites, no funeral pomp I found;
No trophied walls with wreaths of laurel round:
A mean unhonored ruin faintly showed
The spot where once thy mausoleum stood:
Hardly the form remained; a nodding dome
O'ergrown with moss is now all Virgil's tomb.

Anonymous.

THE TOMB OF SANNAZZARO.

'TIS Sannazzaro's tomb! Good shepherds, pause
In veneration! rare shall ye behold
Such splendid honors light on mortal mold!
The sculptured myrtle, sacred laurel, draws
To the great votary of Phœbean laws
The charmed remembrance! On the marble scrolled
Foliage and fruits intwine in graceful fold:
And central, as a goddess, Naples awes.
On one side nets, extended on the sand,
And in the distance a small bark, appear:
Flutes on the other, and a sylvan band.
Nymphs of the groves, and of the waters clear,
A name to fill, like his, the sea and land
Hath Rome or Athens wafted to your ear?

Benedetto Menzini. Tr. Capel Lofft.

NAPLES.

THIS region, surely, is not of the earth.
Was it not dropt from heaven? Not a grove,
Citron or pine or cedar, not a grot
Sea-worn and mantled with the gadding vine,
But breathes enchantment. Not a cliff but flings
On the clear wave some image of delight,
Some cabin-roof glowing with crimson flowers,
Some ruined temple or fallen monument,
To muse on as the bark is gliding by.
And be it mine to muse there, mine to glide,
From daybreak, when the mountain pales his fire
Yet more and more, and from the mountain-top,
Till then invisible, a smoke ascends,
Solemn and slow, as erst from Ararat,
When he, the Patriarch, who escaped the Flood,
Was with his household sacrificing there,
From daybreak to that hour, the last and best,
When, one by one, the fishing-boats come forth,
Each with its glimmering lantern at the prow,
And, when the nets are thrown, the evening hymn
Steals o'er the trembling waters.

Samuel Rogers.

THE KING OF ARRAGON.

THE King of Arragon looked down
From Campo Veijo, where he stood,
And he beheld the Sea of Spain,
Both the ebb-tide and the flood.

He saw the galleys and the ships, —
How some set sail and others enter;
Some were sailing on a cruise,
And others on a merchant's venture.

Some were sailing to Lombardy,
And some to Flanders, far away,
And, O, how bright were the ships of war,
With swelling sails and streamers gay!

He saw the city that spread below, —
Royal Naples, that noble town!
And the three castles, how they stood,
On the great city looking down:

The new castle and the Capuan,
And St. Elmo, far the best, —
Like the sun at the noonday,
It shone so bright above the rest.

The king stood silent for a while,
He gazed and wept at his own thought —

"O Naples, thou 'rt a princely purchase,
  But thou hast been dearly bought!

"Many brave and loyal captains
  You had cost, e'er you were won,
Besides a dear and valiant brother,
  Whom I grieved for like a son,—

"Knights and gallant gentlemen,
  Whose like I ne'er shall see again;
Of soldiers and of other subjects,
  Many, many thousands slain.

"Two-and-twenty years you cost me,
  The best of my life that are passed away;
For here this beard began to grow,
  And here it has been turned to gray."

Spanish Ballad. Tr. John Hookham Frere.

NAPLES.

A SONG OF THE SIREN.

STILL is the Siren warbling on thy shore,
  Bright city of the waves! Her magic song
Still, with a dreamy sense of ecstasy,
Fills thy soft summer air: and while my glance
Dwells on thy pictured loveliness, that lay
Floats thus o'er fancy's ear; and thus to thee,
Daughter of sunshine! doth the Siren sing.

"Thine is the glad wave's flashing play,
Thine is the laugh of the golden day, —
The golden day, and the glorious night,
And the vine with its clusters all bathed in light!
Forget, forget, that thou art not free,
Queen of the summer sea!

"Favored and crowned of the earth and sky!
Thine are all voices of melody,
Wandering in moonlight through fane and tower,
Floating o'er fountain and myrtle bower;
Hark! how they melt o'er thy glittering sea, —
Forget that thou art not free!

"Let the wine flow in thy marble halls,
Let the lute answer thy fountain falls,
And deck thy feasts with the myrtle bough,
And cover with roses thy glowing brow!
Queen of the day and the summer sea,
Forget that thou art not free!"

So doth the Siren sing, while sparkling waves
Dance to her chant. But sternly, mournfully,
O city of the deep! from sibyl grots
And Roman tombs the echoes of thy shore
Take up the cadence of her strain alone,
Murmuring, "Thou art not free!"

Felicia Hemans.

CONRADIN.

CONRADIN, a beautiful youth of sixteen, son of Conrad IV. and grandson of Frederic II. was beheaded in the Largo del Mercato of Naples in 1268. From the scaffold he flung his glove among the crowd below as a challenge to his enemies.

BUT thou, fair boy, the beautiful, the brave,
Thus passing from the dungeon to the grave,
While all is yet around thee which can give
A charm to earth, and make it bliss to live;
Thou on whose form hath dwelt a mother's eye,
Till the deep love that not with thee shall die
Hath grown too full for utterance, — can it be?
And is this pomp of death prepared for thee?
Young, royal Conradin! who shouldst have known
Of life as yet the sunny smile alone!
O, who can view thee in the pride and bloom
Of youth, arrayed so richly for the tomb,
Nor feel, deep swelling in his inmost soul,
Emotions tyranny may ne'er control?
Bright victim! to Ambition's altar led,
Crowned with all flowers that heaven on earth can shed,
Who, from the oppressor towering in his pride,
May hope for mercy, if to thee denied?
There is dead silence on the breathless throng,
Dead silence all the peopled shore along,
As on the captive moves; the only sound,
To break that calm so fearfully profound,
The low, sweet murmur of the rippling wave,
Soft as it glides, the smiling shore to lave;

While on that shore, his own fair heritage,
The youthful martyr to a tyrant's rage
Is passing to his fate: the eyes are dim
Which gaze, through tears that dare not flow, on him.
He mounts the scaffold, — doth his footstep fail?
Doth his lip quiver? doth his cheek turn pale?
O, it may be forgiven him if a thought
Cling to that world, for him with beauty fraught,
To all the hopes that promised glory's meed,
And all the affections that with him shall bleed!
If, in his life's young dayspring, while the rose
Of boyhood on his cheek yet freshly glows,
One human fear convulse his parting breath,
And shrink from all the bitterness of death!

But no! the spirit of his royal race
Sits brightly on his brow: that youthful face
Beams with heroic beauty, and his eye
Is eloquent with injured majesty.
He kneels, — but not to man; his heart shall own
Such deep submission to his God alone!
And who can tell with what sustaining power
That God may visit him in fate's dread hour?
How the still voice, which answers every moan,
May speak of hope, when hope on earth is gone?

That solemn pause is o'er, — the youth hath given
One glance of parting love to earth and heaven.
The sun rejoices in the unclouded sky,
Life all around him glows, — and he must die?
Yet midst his people, undismayed, he throws

The gage of vengeance for a thousand woes, —
Vengeance that, like their own volcano's fire,
May sleep suppressed awhile, but not expire.
One softer image rises o'er his breast,
One fond regret, and all shall be at rest!
"Alas for thee, my mother! who shall bear
To thy sad heart the tidings of despair,
When thy lost child is gone?" — that thought can thrill
His soul with pangs one moment more shall still.
The lifted axe is glittering in the sun, —
It falls, — the race of Conradin is run!
Yet from the blood which flows that shore to stain,
A voice shall cry to Heaven, — and not in vain.
Gaze thou, triumphant from thy gorgeous throne,
In proud supremacy of guilt alone,
Charles of Anjou, — but that dread voice shall be
A fearful summoner e'en yet to thee!

Felicia Hemans.

TO THE FLOWER OF GNIDO.

The title of this ode is derived from a quarter of the city of Naples, called Il Seggio di Gnido, the favorite abode then of people of fashion, in which also the lady lived to whom the ode was addressed. This lady, Violante San Severino, a daughter of the duke of Soma, was courted by Fabio Galeota, a friend of Garcilasso, in whose behalf the poem was written.

HAD I the sweet resounding lyre,
Whose voice could in a moment chain
The howling wind's ungoverned ire,
And movement of the raging main,
On savage hills the leopard rein,

The lion's fiery soul entrance,
And lead along with golden tones
The fascinated trees and stones
In voluntary dance;

Think not, think not, fair Flower of Gnide,
It e'er should celebrate the scars,
Dust raised, blood shed, or laurels dyed
Beneath the gonfalon of Mars;
Or, borne sublime on festal cars,
The chiefs who to submission sank
The rebel German's soul of soul,
And forged the chains that now control
The frenzy of the Frank.

No, no! its harmonies should ring
In vaunt of glories all thine own,
A discord sometimes from the string
Struck forth to make thy harshness known.
The fingered chords should speak alone
Of Beauty's triumphs, Love's alarms,
And one who, made by thy disdain
Pale as a lily clipt in twain,
Bewails thy fatal charms.

* * *

In snows on rocks, sweet Flower of Gnide,
Thou wert not cradled, wert not born,
She who has not a fault beside
Should ne'er be signalized for scorn;
Else, tremble at the fate forlorn
Of Anaxárete, who spurned
The weeping Iphis from her gate,

Who, scoffing long, relenting late,
Was to a statue turned.

Whilst yet soft pity she repelled,
Whilst yet she steeled her heart in pride,
From her friezed window she beheld,
Aghast, the lifeless suicide;
Around his lily neck was tied
What freed his spirit from her chains,
And purchased with a few short sighs
For her immortal agonies,
Imperishable pains.

Then first she felt her bosom bleed
With love and pity; vain distress!
O, what deep rigors must succeed
This first sole touch of tenderness!
Her eyes grow glazed and motionless,
Nailed on his wavering corse, each bone
Hardening in growth, invades her flesh,
Which, late so rosy, warm, and fresh,
Now stagnates into stone.

From limb to limb the frosts aspire,
Her vitals curdle with the cold;
The blood forgets its crimson fire,
The veins that e'er its motion rolled;
Till now the virgin's glorious mould
Was wholly into marble changed,
On which the Salaminians gazed,
Less at the prodigy amazed
Than of the crime avenged.

Then tempt not thou Fate's angry arms
By cruel frown or icy taunt,
But let thy perfect deeds and charms
To poets' harps, divinest, grant
Themes worthy their immortal vaunt;
Else must our weeping strings presume
To celebrate in strains of woe
The justice of some signal blow
That strikes thee to the tomb.

Garcilaso de la Vega. Tr. J. H. Wiffen.

LUISELLA.

HANDSOME Naples girl!
With the distaff in your hand,
Whose silver flax threads curl
Like the white waves on the sand;
In this narrow, dingy street,
On the dark and steep hillside,
In this hovel, can such sweet
And romantic beauty hide?

Spinning through the sunny day,
Underneath the old church-tower,
The waves of Naples Bay
Have not nursed a fairer flower.
You will ne'er that bay forget
Wheresoe'er you may be borne;
It sparkles in your eye of jet,
Its pride is in your scorn.

Singing down the narrow street,
In the sultry, silent hours,
Unconsciously your naked feet
Tread on shells and withered flowers:
Every day the picture fair,
For which distant poets sigh,
Is drawn upon the summer air,
Before your careless eye.

And you watch the sails that bask
In the sunshine, as they go,
But your fancy will not ask
Of your future's weal or woe,
More than of the distant port
To which drift those fading sails,
Or if the voyage be long or short,
Or calm, or vexed with gales.

Handsome Naples girl!
In the dark street high and lone,
While the waves below you sweep and curl,
You shall be wooed and won.
In long tribes of fishermen,
Shall float on Naples bay
The blood that crimsons the brown cheek
I look upon to-day.

Anonymous.

NAPLES.

DELIGHTFUL city of Parthenope,
Still the soft airs that fan thee seem enchanted;
By song and beauty crescent shores still haunted

Along thy bright bay, once the siren's sea!
Well I remember, gazing now on thee,
The wishful dreams, with which my childhood panted,
Of charms, in volumes of dumb Latin vaunted,
Or vowelled in rich Italian melody.
From Capri's rocky isle, where ruins gray
The memory of the first proud Cæsars rear
To where Misenum overlooks the bay, —
Rome's galley-navy used to anchor near, —
The shades of yore, the lights of yesterday,
Hallow each wall and wave and headland here!

William Gibson.

NAPLES.

I THINK not, when I gaze upon thy bay,
That clasps, as with a lover's arms, the sea
Tripping to kiss the curved shore smilingly,
O Naples, of thy charms, though poets say,
"See Naples, and in death then pass away."
I have no eye nor ear but for the glee,
The tide, the bustle, the activity,
Thronging thy streets, as 't were a festive day.
To me, an exile, for how many a year,
In deathlike India, thou art as the gate
Of life, or morning's advent after night;
As welcome as to Dante was the light,
When issuing from the realms of woful fate,
He saw the blessed stars once more appear.

John Bruce Norton.

Naples, the Bay.

SONG OF THE SEA.

I HAVE swung for ages to and fro;
I have striven in vain to reach thy feet,
O garden of joy! whose walls are low,
And odors are so sweet.

I palpitate with fitful love;
I sigh and sing with changing breath;
I raise my hands to heaven above,
I smite my shores beneath!

In vain, in vain! while far and fine,
To curb the madness of my sweep,
Runs the white limit of a line
I may not overleap.

Once thou wert sleeping on my breast,
Till fiery Titans lifted thee
From the fair silence of thy rest,
Out of the loving sea.

And I swing eternal to and fro;
I strive in vain to reach thy feet,
O garden of joy! whose walls are low,
And odors are so sweet!

Rossiter W. Raymond.

THE SONG OF THE SIREN PARTHENOPE.

MINE are these waves, and mine the twilight depths
O'er which they roll, and all these tufted isles
That lift their backs like dolphins from the deep,
And all these sunny shores that gird us round!

Listen! O, listen to the sea-maid's shell;
Ye who have wandered hither from far climes,
(Where the coy Summer yields but half her sweets)
To breathe my bland, luxurious airs, and drink
My sunbeams! and to revel in a land
Where Nature, decked out like a bride to meet
Her lover, lays forth all her charms, and smiles
Languidly bright, voluptuously gay,
Sweet to the sense, and tender to the heart.

Listen! O, listen to the sea-maid's shell;
Ye who have fled your natal shores in hate
Or anger, urged by pale disease, or want,
Or grief, that, clinging like the spectre bat,
Sucks drop by drop the life-blood from the heart,
And hither come to learn forgetfulness
Or to prolong existence! ye shall find
Both, — though the spring Lethean flow no more,
There is a power in these entrancing skies
And murmuring waters and delicious airs,
Felt in the dancing spirits and the blood,
And falling on the lacerated heart

Like balm, until that life becomes a boon,
Which elsewhere is a burthen and a curse.

Hear then, O, hear the sea-maid's airy shell;
Listen, O listen! 't is the siren sings, —
The spirit of the deep, — Parthenope, —
She who did once i' the dreamy days of old
Sport on these golden sands beneath the moon,
Or poured the ravishing music of her song
Over the silent waters, and bequeathed
To all these sunny capes and dazzling shores
Her own immortal beauty and her name.

Anna Jameson.

DRIFTING.

MY soul to-day
Is far away,
Sailing the Vesuvian Bay;
My wingéd boat,
A bird afloat,
Swims round the purple peaks remote; —

Round purple peaks
It sails, and seeks
Blue inlets and their crystal creeks,
Where high rocks throw,
Through deeps below,
A duplicated golden glow.

Far, vague, and dim
The mountains swim;

While on Vesuvius' misty brim,
With outstretched hands,
The gray smoke stands
O'erlooking the volcanic lands.

Here Ischia smiles
O'er liquid miles;
And yonder, bluest of the isles,
Calm Capri waits,
Her sapphire gates
Beguiling to her bright estates.

I heed not, if
My rippling skiff
Float swift or slow from cliff to cliff;
With dreamful eyes
My spirit lies
Under the walls of Paradise.

Under the walls
Where swells and falls
The Bay's deep breast at intervals,
At peace I lie,
Blown softly by,
A cloud upon this liquid sky.

The day, so mild,
Is Heaven's own child,
With Earth and Ocean reconciled;
The airs I feel
Around me steal
Are murmuring to the murmuring keel.

Over the rail
My hand I trail
Within the shadow of the sail,
A joy intense,
The cooling sense
Glides down my drowsy indolence.

With dreamful eyes
My spirit lies
Where Summer sings and never dies, —
O'erveiled with vines,
She glows and shines
Among her future oil and wines.

Her children, hid
The cliffs amid,
Are gambolling with the gambolling kid,
Or down the walls,
With tipsy calls,
Laugh on the rocks like waterfalls.

The fisher's child,
With tresses wild,
Unto the smooth, bright sand beguiled,
With glowing lips
Sings as she skips,
Or gazes at the far-off ships.

Yon deep bark goes
Where traffic blows,
From lands of sun to lands of snows; —

This happier one,
Its course is run
From lands of snow to lands of sun.

O happy ship,
To rise and dip,
With the blue crystal at your lip!
O happy crew,
My heart with you
Sails, and sails, and sings anew!

No more, no more
The worldly shore
Upbraids me with its loud uproar!
With dreamful eyes
My spirit lies
Under the walls of Paradise!

Thomas Buchanan Read.

Nemi.

NEMI.

LO, Nemi! navelled in the woody hills
So far, that the uprooting wind which tears
The oak from his foundation, and which spills
The ocean o'er its boundary, and bears
Its foam against the skies, reluctant spares
The oval mirror of thy glassy lake;

And, calm as cherished hate, its surface wears
A deep, cold, settled aspect naught can shake,
All coiled into itself and round, as sleeps the snake.

And near Albano's scarce divided waves
Shine from a sister valley; and afar
The Tiber winds, and the broad ocean laves
The Latian coast where sprang the Epic war,
"Arms and the Man," whose reascending star
Rose o'er an empire; — but beneath thy right
Tully reposed from Rome; and where yon bar
Of girdling mountains intercepts the sight
The Sabine farm was tilled, the weary bard's delight.

Lord Byron.

NEMI.

HARK! from dark Nemi's plantain-woods, where twining
The tendrilled vine the branches clasps along,
Where glows through olives the bright cactus shining,
Echo the sounds of laughter and of song!
Lo, trooping forth, wild-flowers their hair among,
Albano's dark-browed daughters! from their eyes
Joy flashing lightning, a Bacchante throng:
Forms such as danced beneath Idalian skies,
Or trod the flowery fields of golden Arcadies.

It is Gensano's flower-fête! the streets shine
Strewn o'er with irises of living blue,
Galaxied thick with star-eyed jessamine,

And the rose shedding its rich lustre through:
We tread on living tapestry whose hue
Mocks the faint rainbow, an Hesperian shore
Its glory darkening on the aching view:
Yet hath Art wrought on that mosaic floor
Religion's pictured forms that call ye to adore;

There glows Madonna with her Son, o'erhung
Their brows with lilies: hark! song fills the air,
Winged infants lead the choir with censers swung:
Shedding flower-odors from their raven hair,
With white veils floating from their shoulders bare,
Frascati's daughters elevate above
The sacred Host: Religion watches there,
Her spirit still with olden fable wove,
Wedding great Nature thus, bride-like, with human love.

John Edmund Reade.

END OF VOL. I.

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